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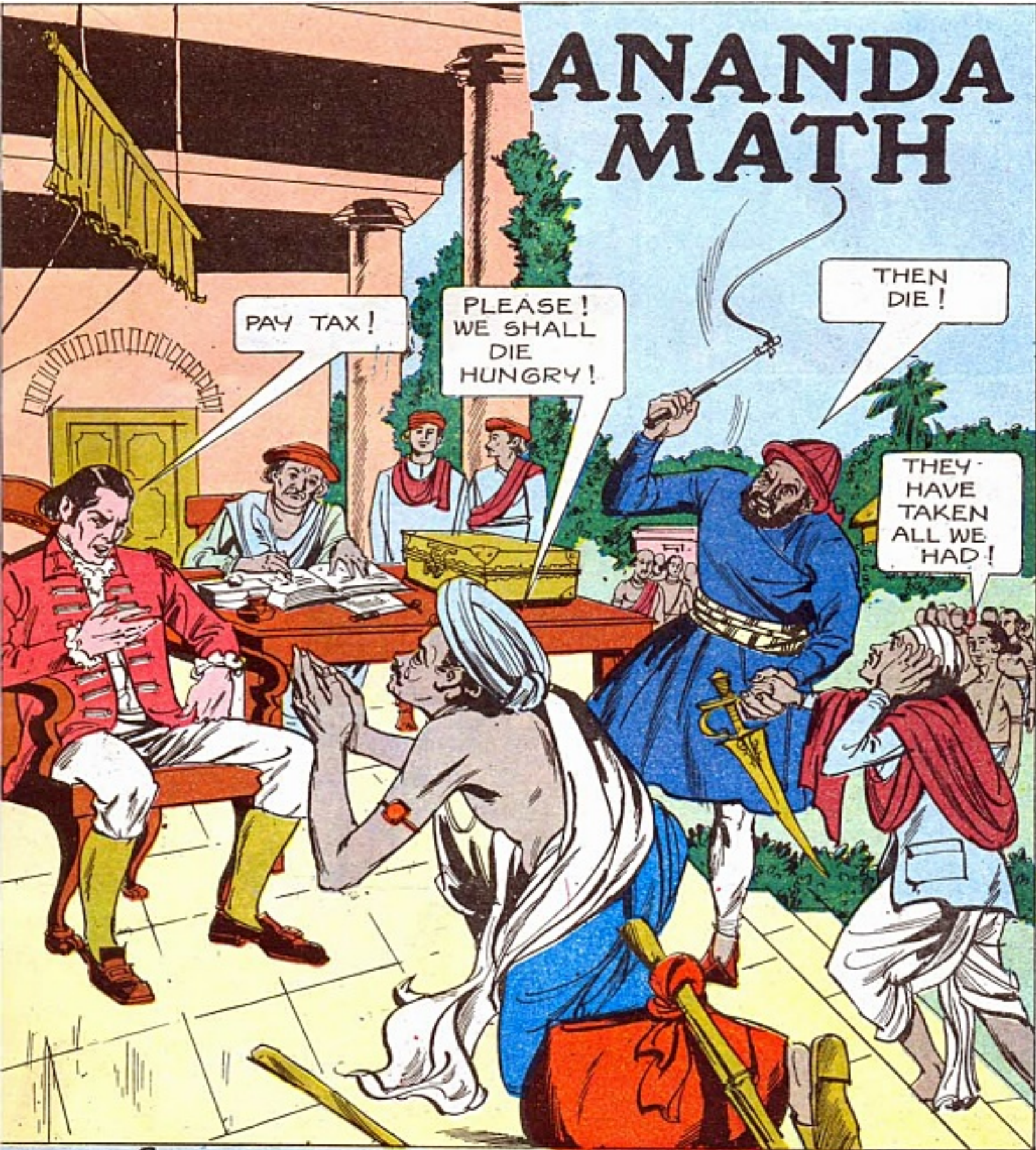
Bengali Classics



3 Illustrated Classics from India

Anand Math • Devi Choudhurani • Kapala Kundala

ANANDA MATH



PAY TAX!

PLEASE!
WE SHALL
DIE
HUNGRY!

THEN
DIE!

THEY
HAVE
TAKEN
ALL WE
HAD!

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY BENGAL. THE BRITISH RULE HAD SPREAD ITS TENTACLES FAR AND WIDE. THE SWORD HAD DRAINED THE LAND OF ITS RICHES. WHILE THE PEOPLE STARVED, THE OPPRESSOR LAUGHED... AND LOOTED. THE MUSLIM KING, WHO RULED, WAS A PUPPET IN BRITISH HANDS.

IN 1773 A.D. PADACHIHNO, ONCE A FLOURISHING VILLAGE WAS REDUCED TO UTTER POVERTY. THE VILLAGERS HAD FLED TO THE CITY WHERE BEGGING MIGHT BRING SOME FOOD. ONLY THREE PEOPLE STAYED ON - MAHENDRA, THE ZAMINDAR OF THE VILLAGE, HIS WIFE AND HIS CHILD.

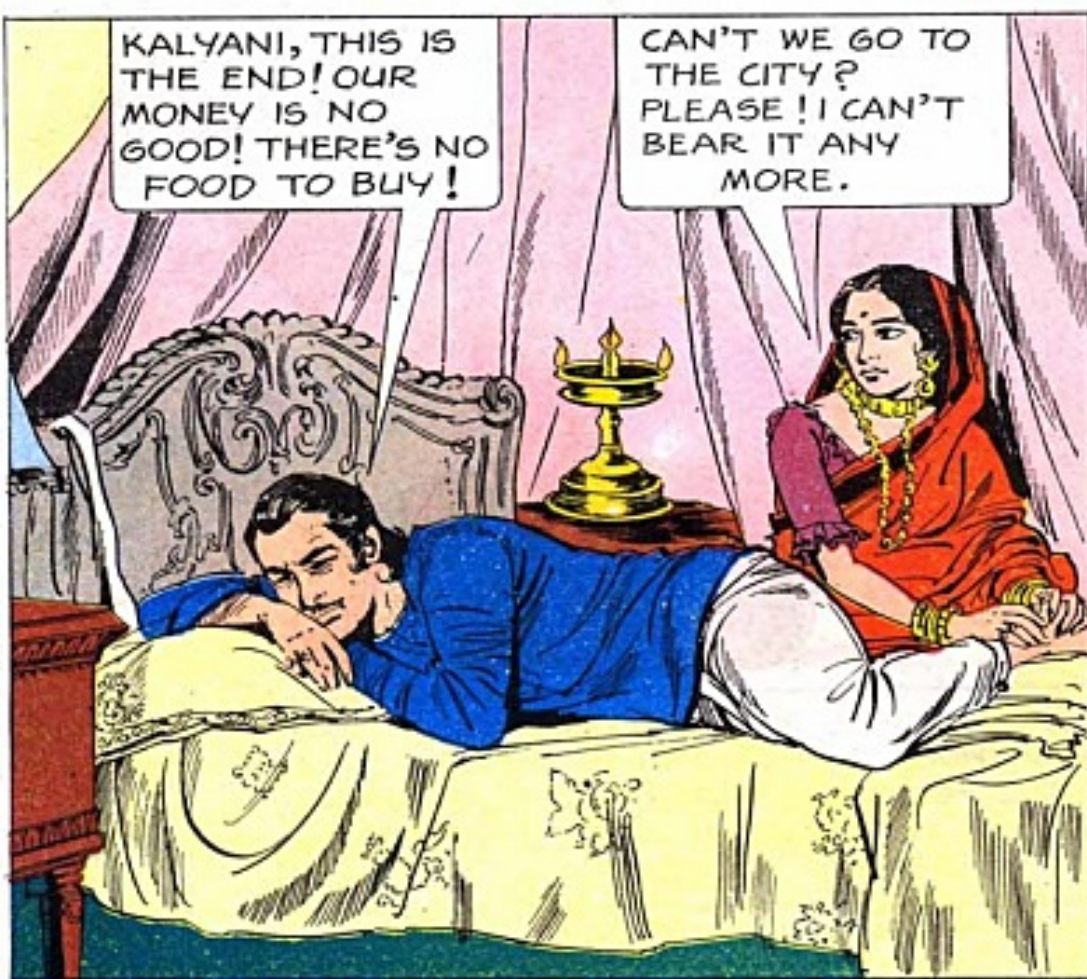


KALYANI, THIS IS THE END! OUR MONEY IS NO GOOD! THERE'S NO FOOD TO BUY!

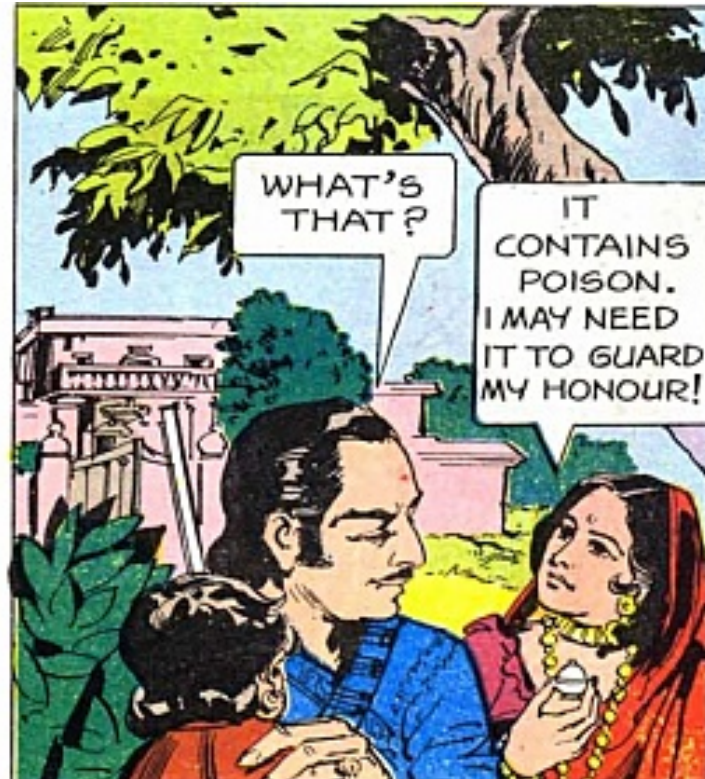
CAN'T WE GO TO THE CITY? PLEASE! I CAN'T BEAR IT ANY MORE.

IF WE GO AWAY, THE DACOITS WILL SEIZE OUR PROPERTY.

IF THEY COME NOW, CAN YOU STOP THEM? PLEASE, LET'S LEAVE.



KALYANI'S COUNSEL PREVAILED.
AS A PRECAUTION, MAHENDRA
ARMED HIMSELF AND SET OUT.



AFTER WALKING FOR MILES
THEY CAME UPON A DESERTED HUT.

LET US REST
HERE. THE
CHILD IS
HUNGRY.

YOU WAIT INSIDE THE HUT.
I'LL TRY TO FIND
SOME ROOTS
AND FRUITS.



WHILE KALYANI WAITED -



SEIZING HER BY THE HAND THEY
DRAGGED HER TOWARDS THE FOREST.



INSIDE THE FOREST, WHEN THE DACOITS
WERE BUSY INSPECTING THEIR LOOT,
KALYANI TRIED TO ESCAPE ...



...BUT, HUNGRY AND CROSS, THE CHILD
SUDDENLY YELLED.



KALYANI DID NOT GIVE UP.
SHE RAN ON AND ON. AT LAST—
I CAN'T RUN ANY FARTHER.
DO I HEAR A SOOTHING
VOICE OR IS IT MY
IMAGINATION?



THE NEXT MOMENT KALYANI
FELL, UNCONSCIOUS, AT THE
FEET OF A TALL SAINTLY MAN.





LATER -

WHERE AM I?
WHO ARE YOU?

YOU ARE SAFE.
THE DACOITS
CAN'T COME
HERE. TELL
ME YOUR
STORY.

THE HERMIT WHO HAD SAVED KALYANI
WAS SATYANANDA. HE HAD MANY
DISCIPLES. HE WENT OUT...



... AND SPOKE TO
ONE OF THEM.

GO, BHAVANANDA. LOOK
FOR MAHENDRA.
JIVANANDA WILL FOLLOW
LATER.

MAHENDRA, MEANWHILE, HAD BEEN CAPTURED BY THE SOLDIERS. BHAVANANDA
FOUND HIM IN THEIR CUSTODY.



CURSE THEM! IF IT IS
NOT THE DACOITS,
IT'S THE SOLDIERS.

HEY!
WHO ARE
YOU?

BHAVANANDA DELIBERATELY
LET THEM CATCH HIM.

I MUST GET
NEAR MAHENDRA.

SPARE ME.
I AM A
SANYASI.

A GOOD-FOR-NOTHING,
YOU MEAN. MAKE HIM
CARRY THE MONEY-CHEST.





I MUST GET ON THAT CART SOMEHOW. THIS SHOULD HELP ME.



THE ROGUE! TIE HIM UP AND THROW HIM IN THE CART.

IT WORKED!



MAHENDRA! I HAVE COME TO RESCUE YOU.

WHO ARE YOU? HOW DO YOU KNOW MY NAME?



THERE'S NO TIME FOR QUESTIONS. QUICK! PUT YOUR WRISTS ON THAT WHEEL. IT WILL CUT THE ROPE.



JIVANANDA SHOULD SOON BE HERE.



SUDDENLY—

LOOK! ANOTHER SANYASI!



TWO MORE
ARE COMING
THIS WAY!

JIVANANDA
HAS NEVER
FAILED US.

WE'RE
SURROUNDED.
IT'S AN AMBUSH!

THE BRITISH OFFICER
GAVE ORDERS.

DON'T PANIC!
FORM A CIRCLE.
FIRE!



HARI!

HARI!



HARI! HARI!

THE TERRIFIED TROOPS RAN
FOR THEIR LIVES.



GOOD WORK!
JIVANANDA,
TAKE THE
MONEY TO
THE VAULTS.

AS BHAVANANDA AND MAHENDRA
WALKED THROUGH THE FORESTS—

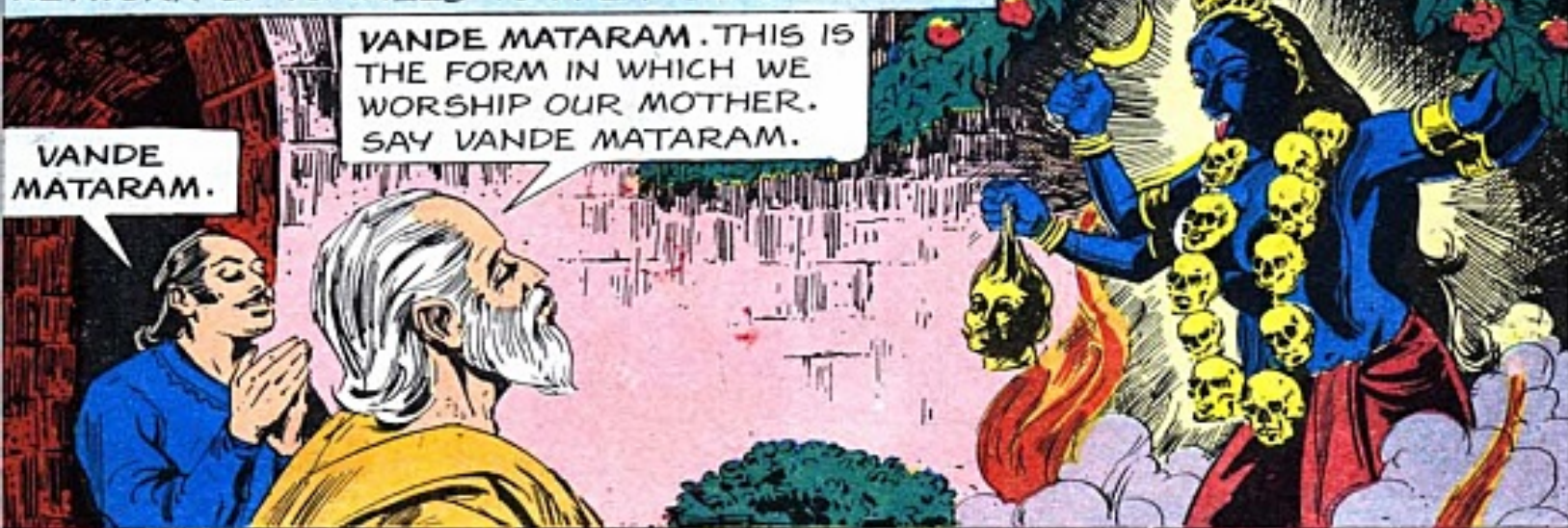
MAHENDRA! I GAVE
YOU A SWORD!
WHY DIDN'T YOU
FIGHT?

HOW COULD I?
I AM A
ZAMINDAR.
YOU ARE
DACOITS.





INSIDE ANANDA MATH, SATYANANDA TOOK MAHENDRA THROUGH A NETWORK OF TUNNELS TO A LARGE SHRINE.



VANDE MATARAM.

VANDE MATARAM. THIS IS THE FORM IN WHICH WE WORSHIP OUR MOTHER. SAY VANDE MATARAM.

WHEN MAHENDRA CAME OUT—



KALYANI!

KALYANI SHED TEARS OF JOY.



LET US GO BACK TO PADACHIHNNO. WE WILL NEVER MAKE IT TO THE CITY.



SOMEHOW I BELIEVE IN THESE SANYASIS.

THEN WHY DON'T YOU GIVE US UP AND JOIN THEM?



AND WHAT WILL YOU DO? WHERE WILL YOU GO?

DON'T WORRY. LEAVE THAT TO ME.

JUST THEN UNNOTICED BY THEM
THEIR CHILD HAD PICKED UP THE
CASKET OF POISON.



SATYANANDA SPIED JIVANANDA HIDING BEHIND A BUSH. HE CALLED OUT SOMETHING IN SANSKRIT WHICH THE CAPTORS MISTOOK FOR A CHANT.

धीरन्ममीवे तटिनीतीवे
वसति वने वरुणादी *



* IN THE FOREST, ON THE BANK OF THE RIVER, THERE IS A WOMAN...

JIVANANDA SOON FOUND KALYANI.



THE MOTHER IS DEAD.
BUT THE CHILD IS ALIVE.
IT MUST BE MAHENDRA'S
FAMILY.

I HOPE BHAVANANDA
OR SOMEONE ELSE
COMES THIS WAY
AND CREMATES
THE BODY. THE
CHILD NEEDS
IMMEDIATE CARE.



SINCE HE WAS A SANTAN, JIVANANDA COULD NOT GO TO HIS WIFE TILL THE LAND WAS FREE. SO HE WENT TO HIS SISTER'S HOUSE.

I WANT YOU TO
TAKE CARE
OF THIS CHILD.

WHAT A PRETTY
CHILD. GIVE IT TO ME.



AS JIVANANDA TURNED TO GO,
SHANTI, HIS WIFE REACHED THERE.

SHANTI, YOU LOOK
UNHAPPY. WHAT'S
THE MATTER?

MY LIFE HAS NO
MEANING WITHOUT YOU.



WITH A HEAVY HEART, JIVANANDA
PARTED FROM HIS WIFE.

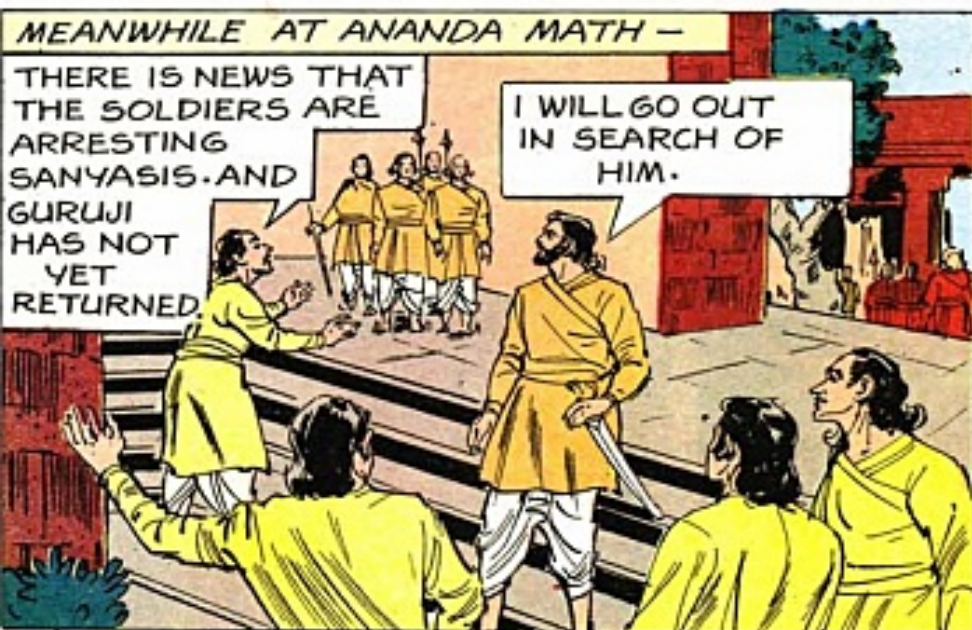
I WILL FOLLOW
HIM.



MEANWHILE AT ANANDA MATH -

THERE IS NEWS THAT
THE SOLDIERS ARE
ARRESTING
SANYASIS. AND
GURUJI
HAS NOT
YET
RETURNED.

I WILL GO OUT
IN SEARCH OF
HIM.



DRESSED AS A NOBLEMAN,
BHAVANANDA LEFT ON
HORSEBACK.



AT THE EDGE OF THE FOREST -

WHAT'S THIS? A
BEAUTIFUL WOMAN!
SHE SEEMS
TO BE DEAD.



BHAVANANDA BROUGHT SOME HERBS
AND POURED THEIR JUICE INTO
KALYANI'S MOUTH.

SHE IS
BREATHING.



I'LL TAKE HER TO THE
CITY AND LEAVE HER
IN A SAFE PLACE.
I WONDER WHO
SHE IS.



MEANWHILE, AT ANANDA MATH -

GURUJI AND MAHENDRA ARE
IN THE CITY JAIL. BHAVANANDA
HAS NOT RETURNED EITHER.
WE'LL FREE OUR GURUJI.



ARMED WITH SWORDS AND SPEARS, THE
SANTAANS LEFT FOR THE CITY.

HARE
MURARE!



BOLDLY THEY ATTACKED THE GUARDS OF THE JAIL
AND FREED SATYANANDA AND MAHENDRA.

I AM PLEASED WITH
YOU. THE DAY OUR
LAND WILL BE FREE
IS NOT FAR OFF.



AS THEY PROCEEDED TOWARDS ANANDA MATH—

BRITISH SOLDIERS!
THEY'VE HEARD OF
GURUJI'S ESCAPE!
HARI! HARI!



THEIR SWORDS AND SPEARS WERE NO
MATCH AGAINST THE GUNS. HUNDREDS
DIED.



LATER, BHAVANANDA TOO REACHED
THE SCENE. BUT—

FALL BACK! THIS
SACRIFICE IS
MEANINGLESS.



THAT NIGHT AT ANANDA MATH—

GURUJI, I WOULD LIKE
TO BE INITIATED AS A
SANYASI. I'LL READILY
DIE FOR THE CAUSE.



IN THE PRESENCE OF THE
MOTHER—

DO YOU PROMISE TO GIVE
UP ALL WORLDLY TIES TILL
THE MOTHER IS FREED?

I DO.



THERE WAS SOMEBODY ELSE
WAITING TO BE ORDAINED TOO.

DO YOU PROMISE TO GIVE
YOUR LIFE, IF NEED BE,
TO FREE THE
MOTHER?

I DO.



I NAME YOU
NAVINANANDA.



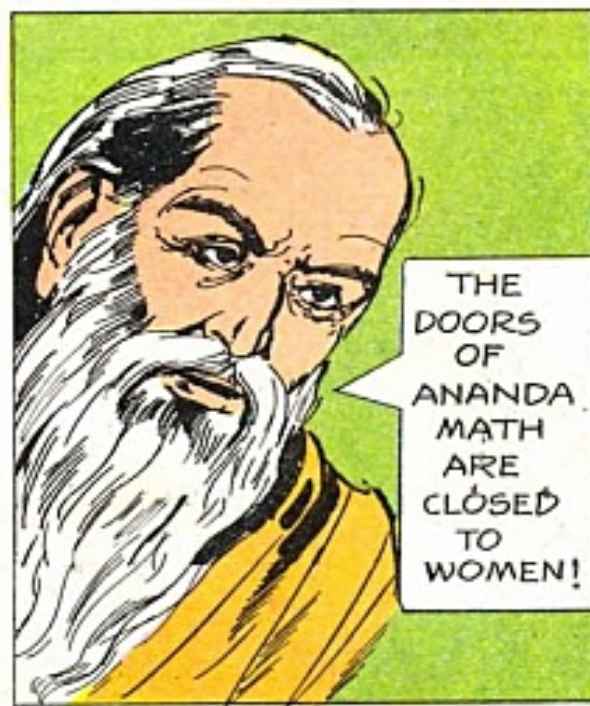
LATER, WHEN SATYANANDA
WAS ALONE WITH NAVINANANDA—

YOU SEEM TO BE A
WOMAN DISGUISED
AS A MAN. TELL ME
THE TRUTH.

I AM A
WOMAN.



THE
DOORS
OF
ANANDA
MATH
ARE
CLOSED
TO
WOMEN!



WHY?

WE ARE HERE
TO FIGHT FOR
THE MOTHER.
WHAT CAN
YOU DO?

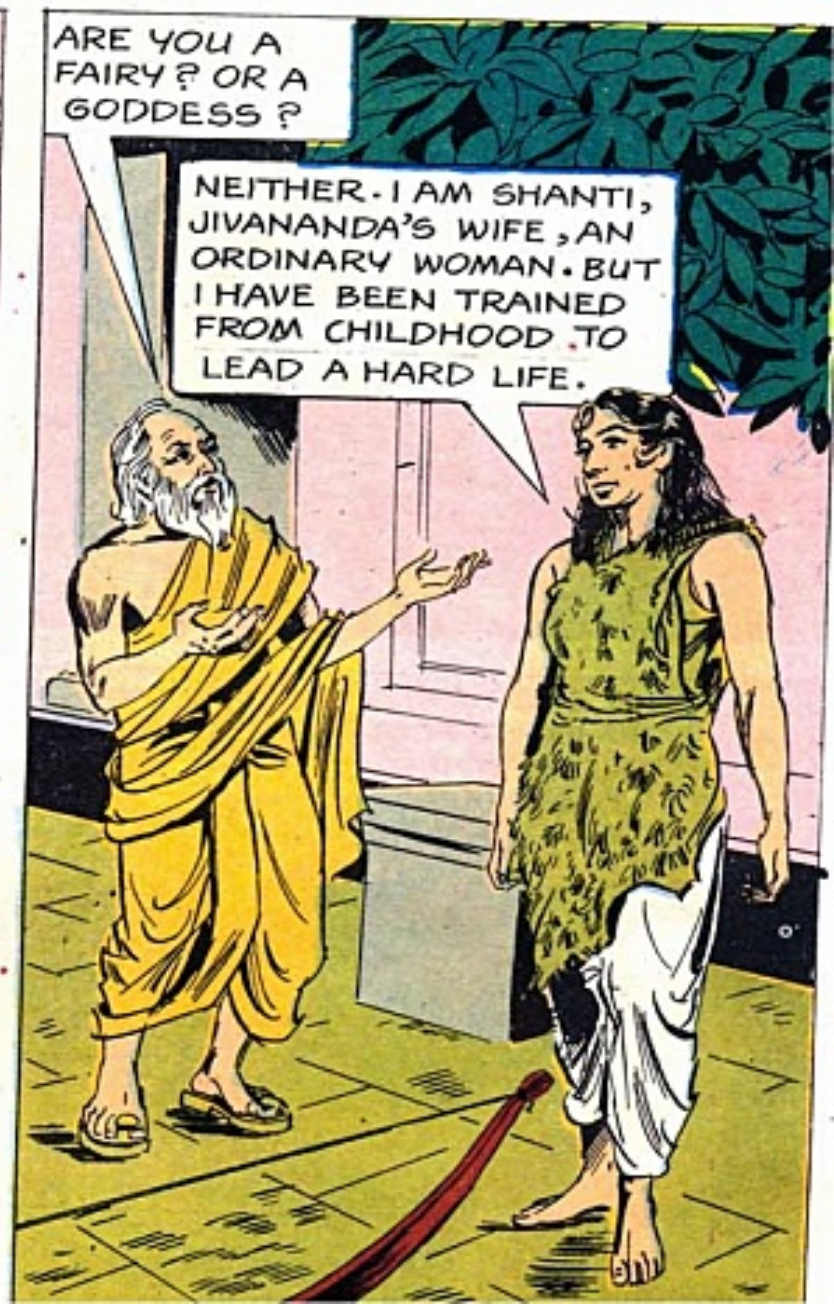


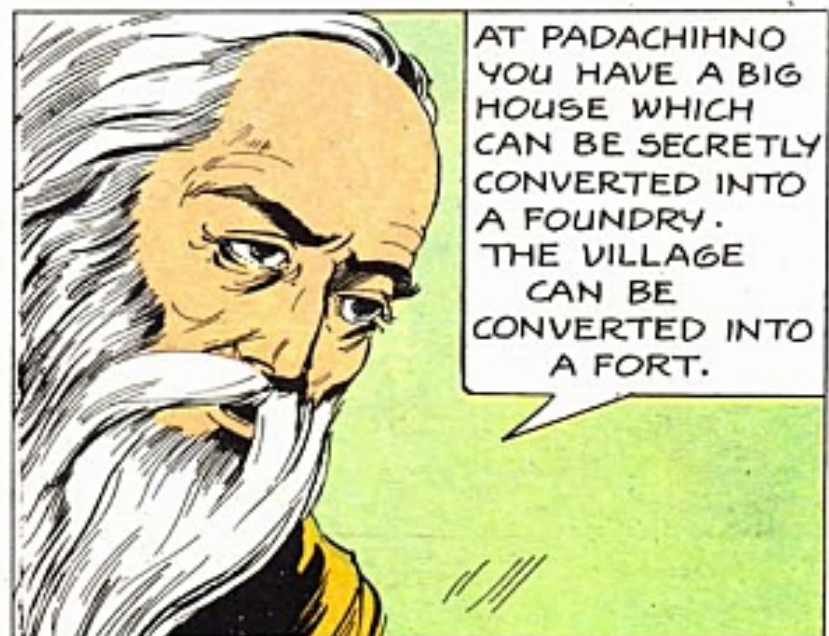
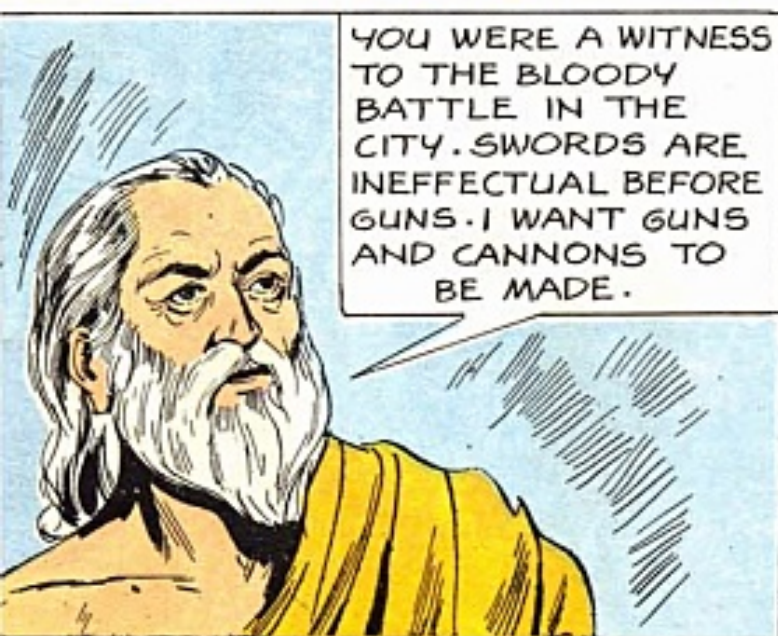
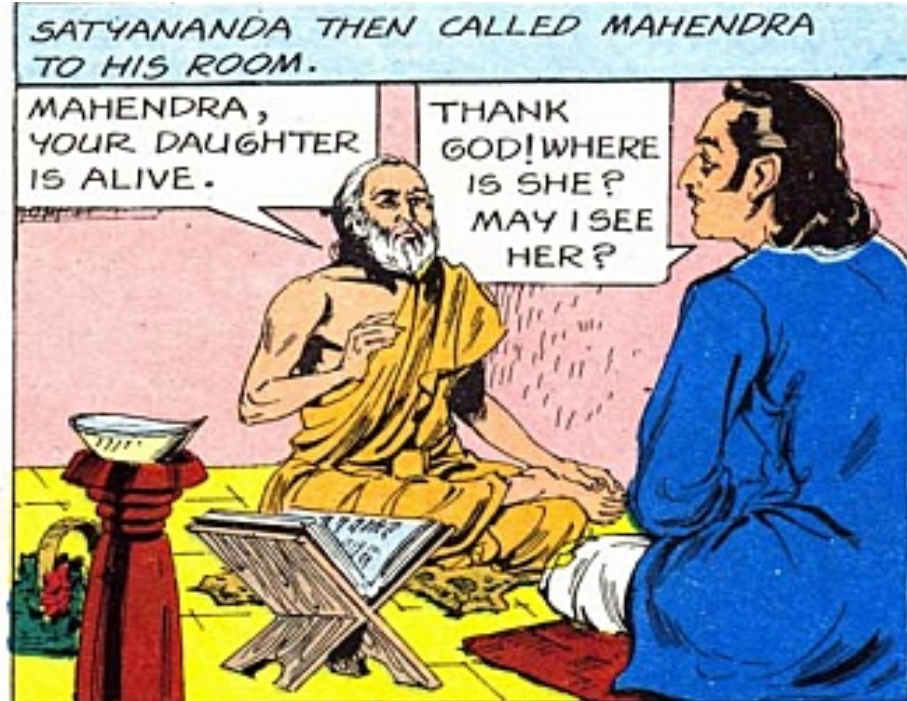
I CAN FIGHT
AS WELL AS
ANY MAN.
TEST ME.



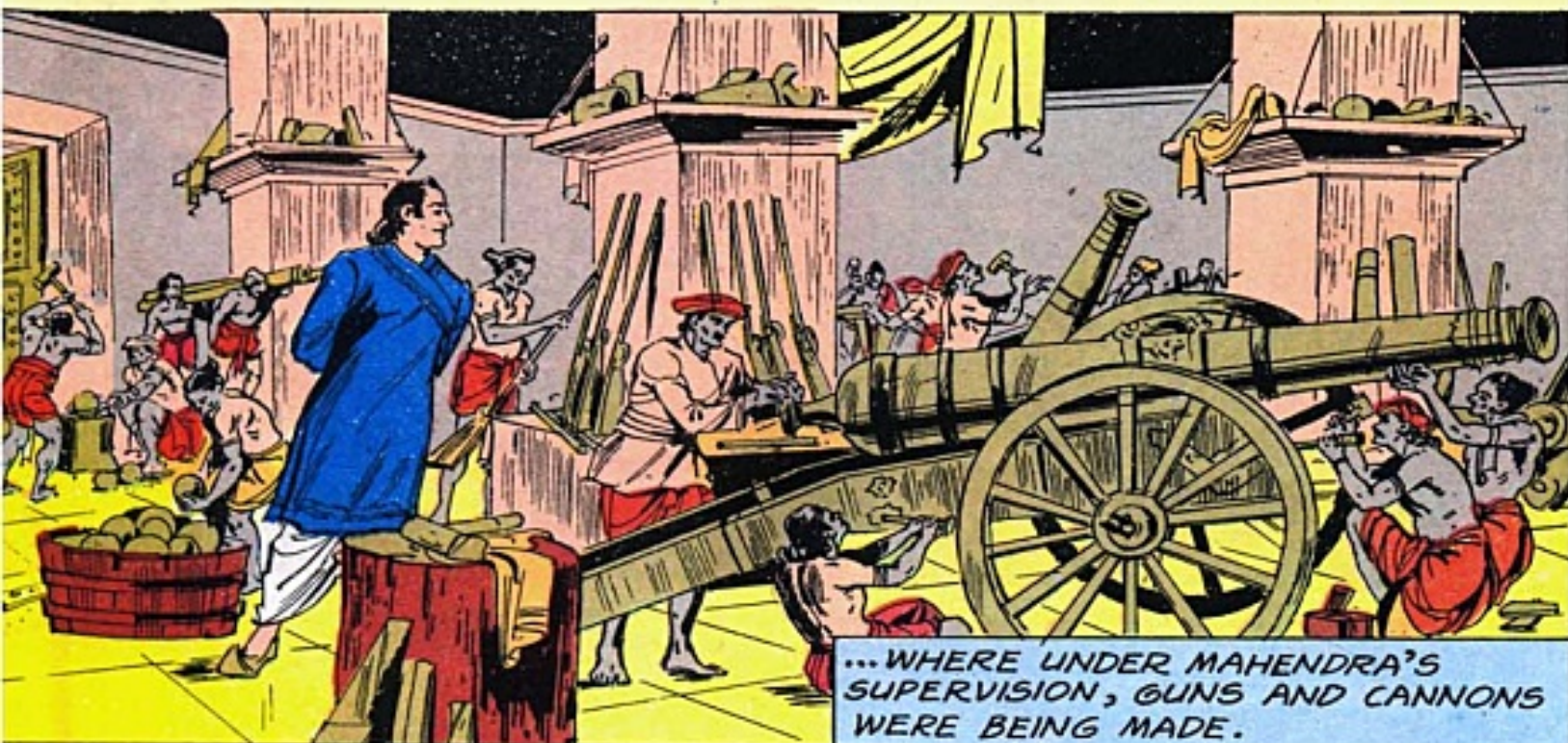


BEFORE SATYANANDA COULD
COMPLETE THE SENTENCE SHANTI
HAD STRUNG THE BOW AND THROWN
IT AT THE FEET OF SATYANANDA.





SATYANANDA WENT ON A TOUR OF THE COUNTRY. HE SENT EXPERT GUNSMITHS AND SWORDSMITHS TO PADACHIHNNO, NOW A STRONG FORT...



AFTER ABOUT A YEAR, THE SANTAANS GATHERED IN A MANGO GROVE. THEIR RANKS HAD SWELLED TO OVER TEN THOUSAND. THEY WERE EAGERLY AWAITING THE ARRIVAL OF SATYANANDA, THEIR GURU.

NAVINANANDA, I HEAR THAT WARREN HASTINGS HAS SENT A BIG ENGLISH ARMY UNDER CAPTAIN THOMAS TO CRUSH US.

GURUJI WILL LEAD US TO VICTORY.



SATYANANDA CAME.



BROTHERS!
VICTORY IS NOT
FAR OFF. VANDE
MATARAM!

VANDE MATARAM! WE
ARE READY. LET US
MARCH ON CAPT.
THOMAS.

THE TIME
IS NOT YET
RIPE. WE
WILL HAVE
TO WAIT
AWHILE.



BUT SUDDENLY—



SHELLS, FIRED BY BRITISH CANNONS,
BURST AROUND THEM.



THE BRITISH HAVE COME.

THE CANNONS TOOK A HEAVY TOLL.



JIVANANDA!
I APPOINT YOU
COMMANDER OF
THE FORCES. GO,
GET THE CANNONS
OF THE BRITISH.

SHANTI WAS BY THE
SIDE OF HER BELOVED
THAT DAY EVEN IN BATTLE.

THE SANTAANS ADVANCED.

HARI! HARI!

VANDE
MATARAM!



ANOTHER ROUND OF FIRE FROM
THE CANNONS KILLED MANY.

THIS SACRIFICE IS
UNNECESSARY.

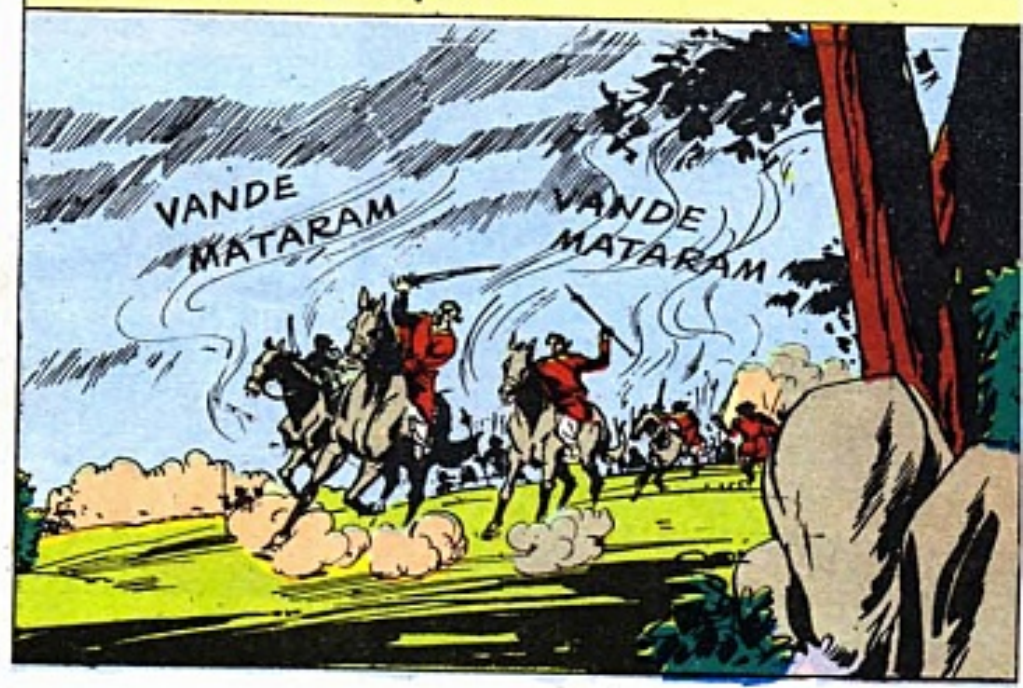


GURUJI HAS ORDERED
ME TO GO AND GET THE
BRITISH CANNONS. I AM
GOING. WILL YOU COME?

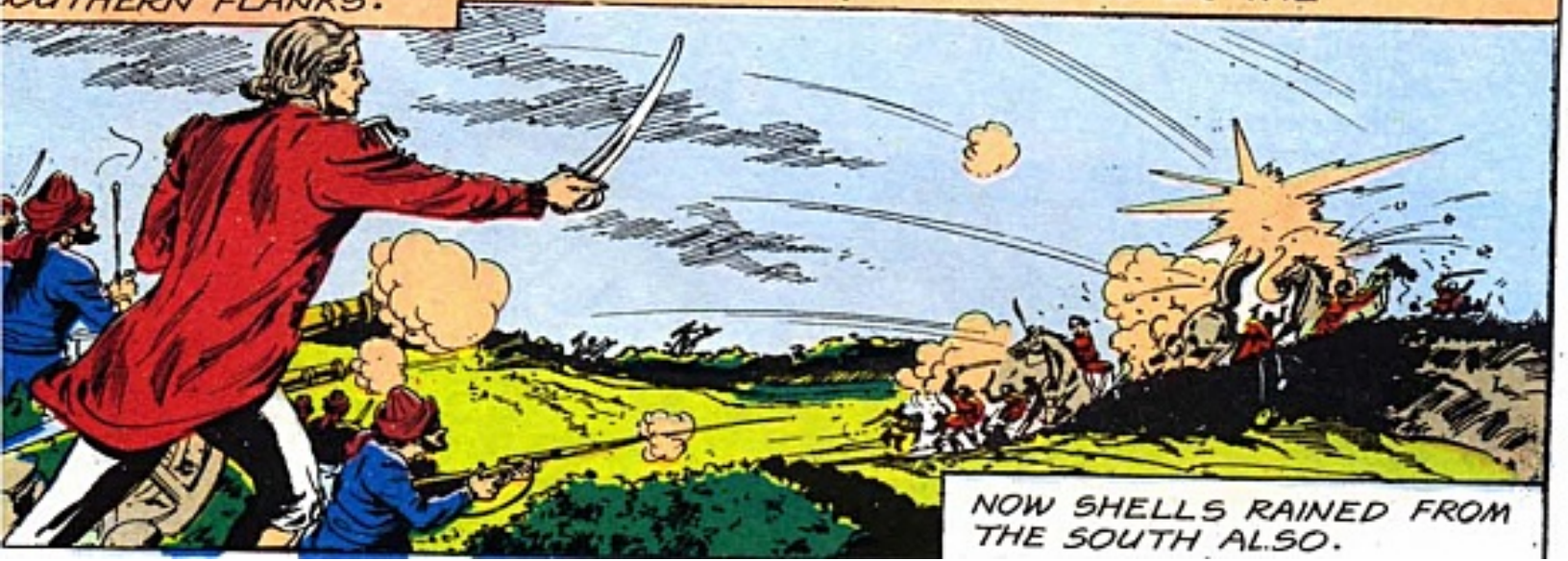
I WILL!



SHOUTS OF 'VANDE MATARAM' RENT
THE AIR AS THE SANTAANS RODE
TOWARDS THE ENEMY.



MEANWHILE, CAPTAIN THOMAS HAD SENT A UNIT TO COVER THE
SOUTHERN FLANKS.



NOW SHELLS RAINED FROM
THE SOUTH ALSO.

THE SANTAANS WERE TRAPPED.

BHAVANANDA! NOT A SINGLE MAN CAN ESCAPE ALIVE NOW, UNLESS WE THINK FAST.

WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY OUT - ACROSS THE BRIDGE ON THE RIVER AJAY.



BUT IF THE CANNON SHELLS FALL ON THE BRIDGE WHILE THE SANTAANS ARE CROSSING, ALL WILL DIE.

NO, JIVANANDA! YOU LEAD THE SANTAANS TO SAFETY WHILE I HOLD BACK THE BRITISH.



VANDE MATARAM!

LET US DIE SO THAT OTHERS MAY LIVE. VANDE MATARAM!



WITH ABOUT 2,000 MEN, BHAVANANDA FACED THE BRITISH CANNONS.

AS JIVANANDA AND THE SANTAANS
RODE TO SAFETY -



LET NONE ESCAPE.
FOLLOW THEM. TAKE
CANNONS WITH YOU.

BHAVANANDA ATTACKED CAPTAIN
THOMAS -



CHARGE!

IN A MATTER OF MINUTES CAPTAIN
THOMAS WAS CAPTURED.



THEY TIED HIM AND RUSHED TO
THE HELP OF JIVANANDA...



... WHO WAS HAVING A DIFFICULT TIME BECAUSE OF THE CANNONS.



THE SHELLS STARTED FALLING
ON THE BRIDGE ON WHICH THE
SANTAANS HAD GATHERED.

BHAVANANDA COULD NOT BEAR
TO SEE THE DESTRUCTION.

COME, JIVANANDA,
LET US CAPTURE
THE CANNONS.



INSPIRED BY THE COURAGE OF
BHAVANANDA AND JIVANANDA, MORE
SANTAANS RUSHED FORWARD ON
THE SUICIDAL MISSION.



SOON ONE OF THE CANNONS WAS
CAPTURED.

TURN THE
CANNON ON
THE
BRITISH.



THE CANNON NOW RAINED SHELLS
ON THE BRITISH ARMY.



THE BRITISH ARMY HAD MANY CANNONS. THE SANTAANS HAD ONLY ONE.
THE BATTLE WAS STILL UNEVEN. JUST THEN ...



...CANNONS BOOMED IN THE FOREST.

MAHENDRA HAD BROUGHT SEVENTEEN CANNONS FROM PADACHIHNO.

THEY ARE OUR
CANNONS. WE'LL NOW
MAKE MINCEMEAT OF
THE BRITISH ARMY.



SANTAANS, WHO WERE FLEEING ACROSS THE
BRIDGE RUSHED BACK TO FIGHT THE BRITISH.

THE TIDE OF THE BATTLE HAD TURNED. THE NATIVES IN THE BRITISH
ARMY RAN HELTER-SKELTER.



HARI!
HARI!

VANDE
MATARAM!

THE SANTAANS SPARED NONE.

ABOUT FORTY ENGLISH SOLDIERS, SUR-
ROUNDED THEM. BHAVANANDA SUDDENLY
TURNED HIS ATTENTION TO CAPT.
THOMAS WHO WAS A PRISONER.

LET ME
KILL HIM!



CAPT. THOMAS APPEALED TO
HIS MEN.

I'D RATHER BE
KILLED BY YOU
THAN BY THIS
PAGAN. FIRST
KILL ME. THEN
KILL HIM.



A BRITISH SOLDIER'S BULLET
HIT CAPT. THOMAS.



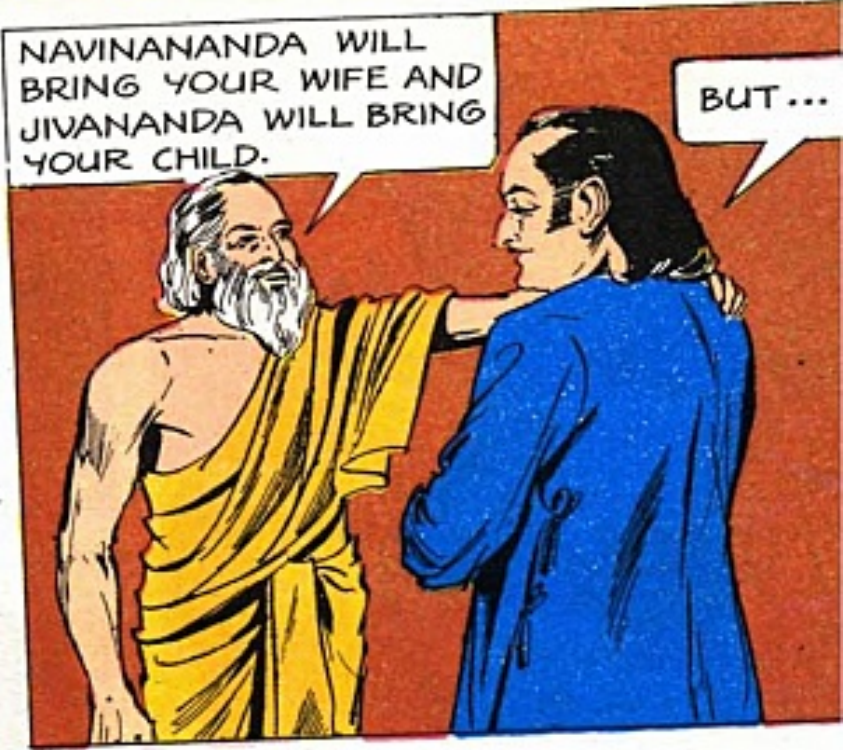
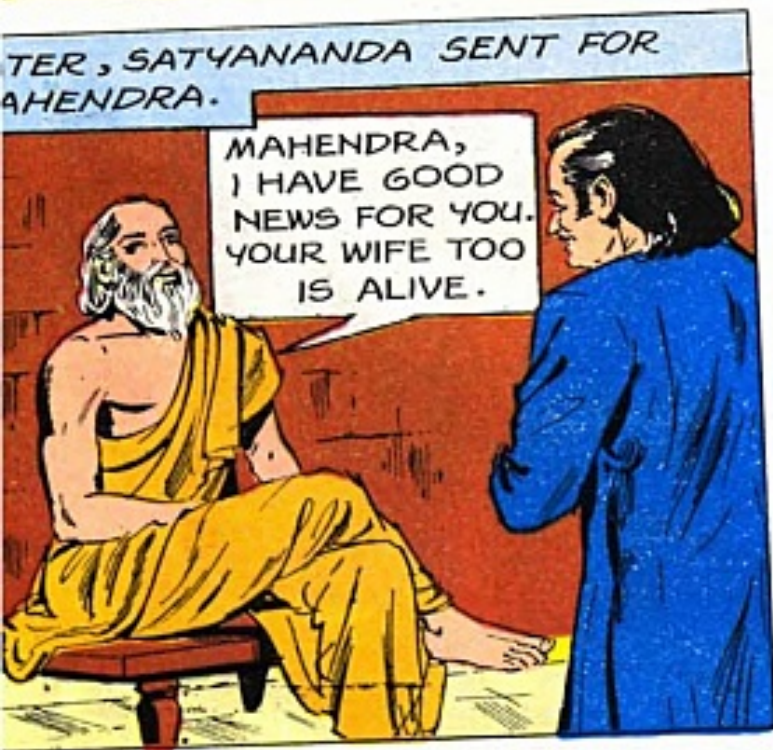
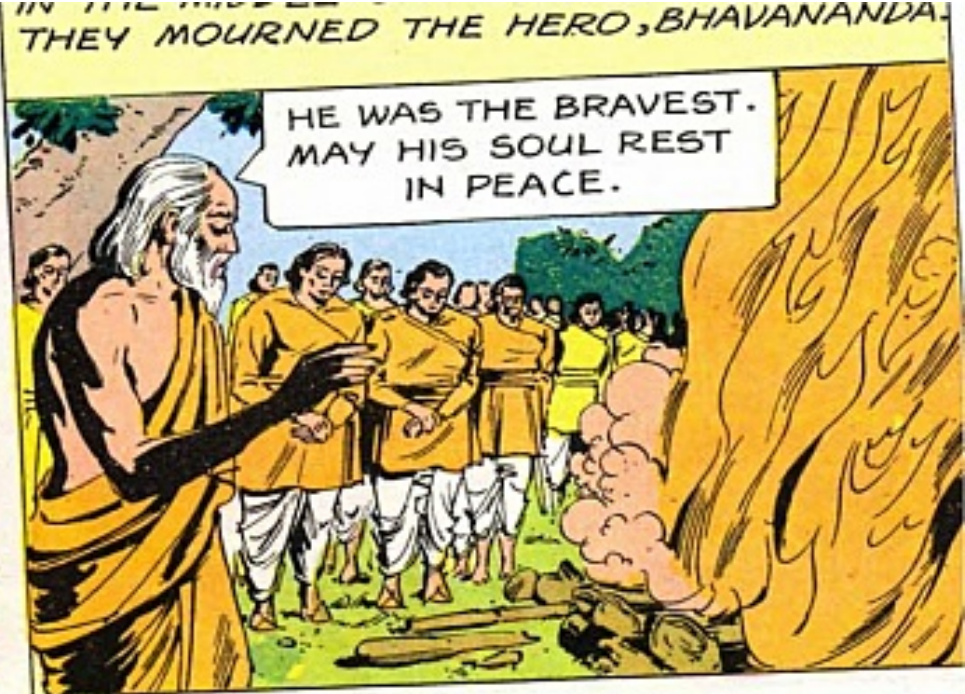
THEN THEY TURNED THEIR WRATH
ON BHAVANANDA.



BHAVANANDA, FELL DEAD.

I DIE FOR
MY MOTHER.
VANDE MATARAM.





IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE WE FINALLY CRUSH THEM. I FREE YOU FROM YOUR VOW.



NAVINANANDA DID NOT HAVE TO GO AS FAR AS THE CITY TO BRING KALYANI.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING, WOMAN?

I AM A POOR BEGGAR. DON'T STOP ME.



HA, HA! A WOMAN LIKE YOU DOES NOT HAVE TO GO BEGGING.



TAKE THAT!



I HAVE SAVED YOU. DO YOU LIKE ME?

HE WILL HARM ME. I MUST RUN.



LEAVE ME ALONE.





MONTHS LATER, A LARGE ARMY WAS SENT FROM CALCUTTA UNDER MAJOR EDWARDS TO CRUSH THE SANTAAN UPRISING.



THE RUMOURS SPREAD BY BRITISH SPIES REACHED MAHENDRA'S EARS AT PADACHIHNO.



ON THE FULL MOON DAY, THOUSANDS OF SANTANS CONVERGED AT THE FAIR.



MEANWHILE, NAVINANANDA PLANNED A VISIT TO THE BRITISH CAMP.



NAVINANANDA, NOW DRESSED AS A BEGGAR WOMAN, ENTERED THE BRITISH CAMP.



MAJOR EDWARDS WAS PLEASED.

YOU SING WELL. HERE'S A RUPEE. BUT IF YOU CAN GO AND FIND OUT HOW MANY GUARDS THEY HAVE AT THE FORT, I'LL GIVE YOU A HUNDRED.

YOU PROMISE!

THE TARGET IS THE FORT. I MUST LET THEM KNOW.

BACK IN THE MANGO GROVE, SHANTI GAVE THE INFORMATION SHE HAD GATHERED TO JIVANANDA.

GO AND INFORM GURUJI. I WILL RUSH TO MAHENDRA.

MAHENDRA'S ARMY HAD PAUSED AT THE FOOT OF A HILL. MAHENDRA SAW A FIGURE RIDING TOWARDS THEM.

THE BRITISH ARMY IS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE HILL. LET'S REACH THE TOP BEFORE THEY DO.

IT WAS TOO LATE BY THEN.



THE BRITISH CANNONS WERE THERE BEFORE THEM.

THEY BEGAN SPITTING FIRE AND SHELLS UPON THE SANTAANS.



JIVANANDA HAS FALLEN.

LET'S DIE WITH HIM.



MEANWHILE SATYANANDA AND NAVINANANDA CAME WITH THE ARMY THAT HAD GATHERED AT THE FAIR.



THEY SWEEPED DOWN ON THE BRITISH FROM ABOVE THE RIDGE. THE BRITISH FORCES WERE CRUSHED BETWEEN MAHENDRA'S ARMY AND SATYANANDA'S ARMY.

HARI! HARI!

VANDE MATARAM!

VANDE MATARAM!

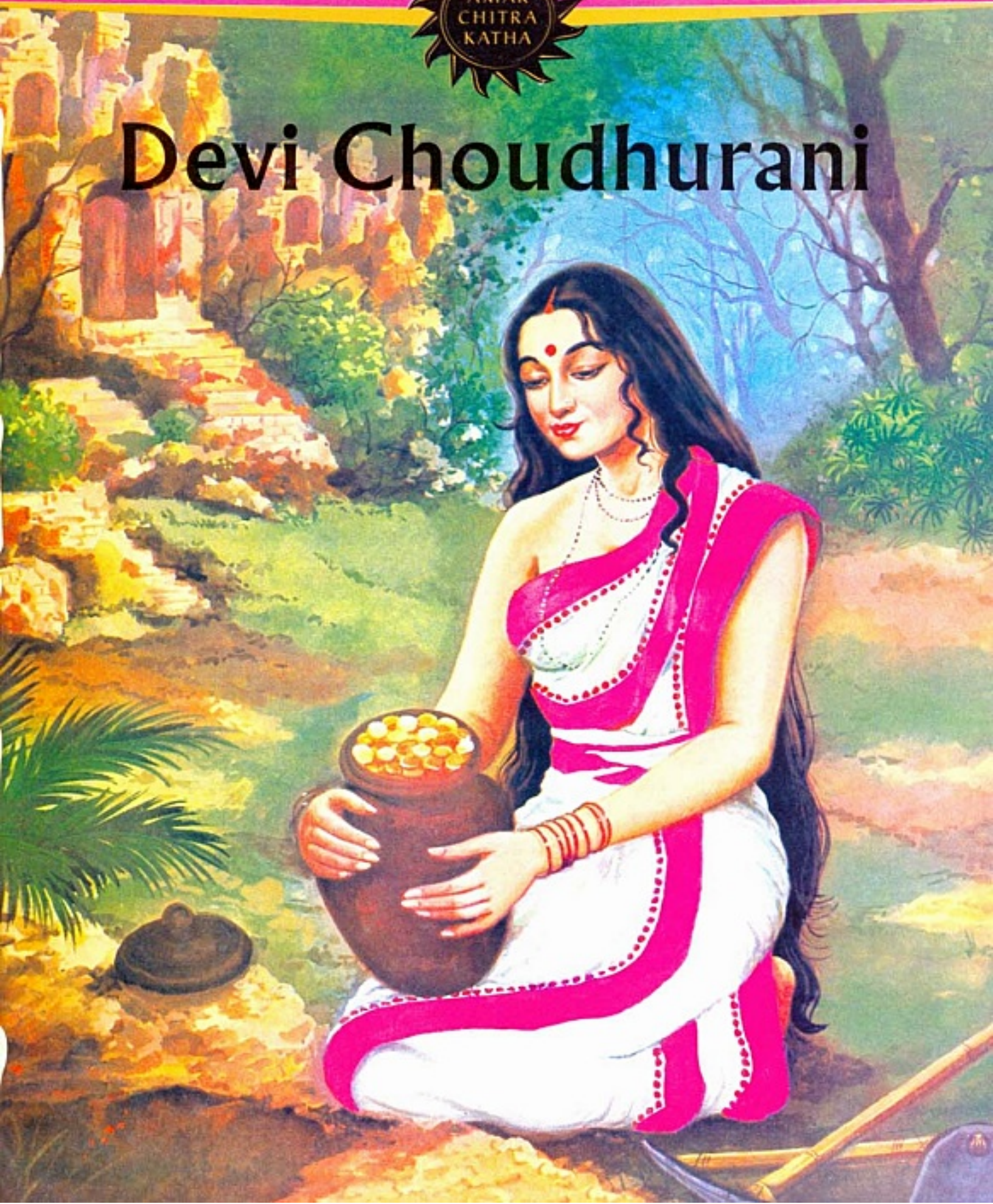




NOTHING WAS LEFT OF ANANDA MATH. THOSE WHO HAD SURVIVED WENT THEIR SEPARATE WAYS. BUT THE SPARK REMAINED....AND THE SLOGAN-VANDE MATARAM!



Devi Choudhurani





Illustrated Classics From India

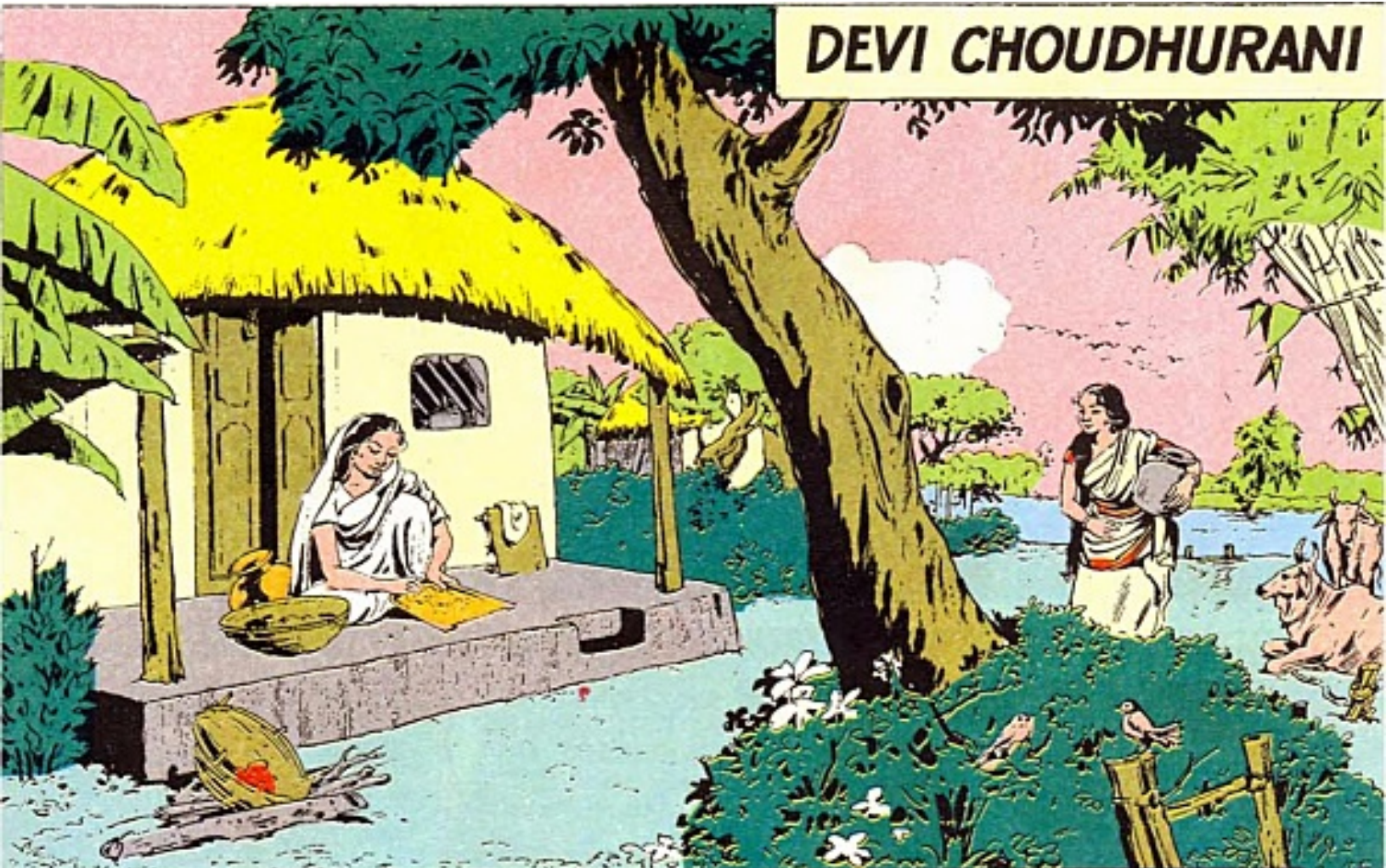
Devi Choudhurani

Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay (1838–1894) is considered to be one of the greatest writers in the world of Bengali literature. His *Devi Choudhurani* is an enthralling, adventurous and romantic story.

Before Bankim Chandra, writers in India had depended upon Sanskrit literature for plots. Bankim Chandra was the first to realise that history could be a rich source of material. His historical fiction became popular at once and he came to be referred to as the Walter Scott of India. His novels, although originally written in Bengali, have been translated into many Indian languages.

Both Devi Choudhurani and her mentor, Bhavani Pathak, are historical characters who figure in the report of Lieutenant Brennan, quoted by Hunter in his 'Statistical Account of Bengal'. There is no historical explanation of what converted the young, vulnerable Prafulla into the great Devi Choudhurani in the first place, and what made her give it up later. However, Bankim Chandra's fertile imagination has provided answers to these puzzling questions in his novel, on which our tale is based.

Script: Debrani Mitra Illustrations: Souren Roy



IN DURGAPUR, A SMALL VILLAGE OF NORTH BENGAL, THERE LIVED A POOR BRAHMAN WIDOW WITH HER BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER, PRAFULLA.

FAME OF PRAFULLA'S BEAUTY REACHED THE EARS OF HARABALLABH, THE ZAMINDAR OF BHUTHNATH.

SHE IS THE GIRL FOR MY SON. POOR SHE CERTAINLY IS. BUT SHE IS A KULIN BRAHMAN GIRL, AND THEY ARE HARD TO COME BY.



AND HE WENT TO SEE PRAFULLA'S MOTHER.

I WISH TO MARRY MY ONLY CHILD BRAJESHWAR TO YOUR DAUGHTER.

I AM HONOURED, SIR.



THE WEDDING SOON TOOK PLACE. PRAFULLA'S MOTHER DID HER BEST TO PLEASE ALL. BUT —

SHE GAVE A GRAND FEAST TO THE GROOM'S PARTY, AND WE WERE LEFT OUT.

WE SHOULD AVENGE THIS INSULT.



TWO DAYS LATER, THE ENVIOUS NEIGHBOURS MET HARABALLABH AT HIS HOUSE.



SIR! PRAFULLA'S MOTHER HAS NO CHARACTER. IF ONLY YOU HAD CONSULTED US...

I SEE...

ANGRY AND AGITATED, HARABALLABH WENT TO HIS WIFE AND TOLD HER EVERYTHING.



SEND PRAFULLA BACK TO HER MOTHER. AND SHE NEED NOT RETURN.

BUT WHY? JUST BECAUSE OF SOME VILLAGE GOSSIP?

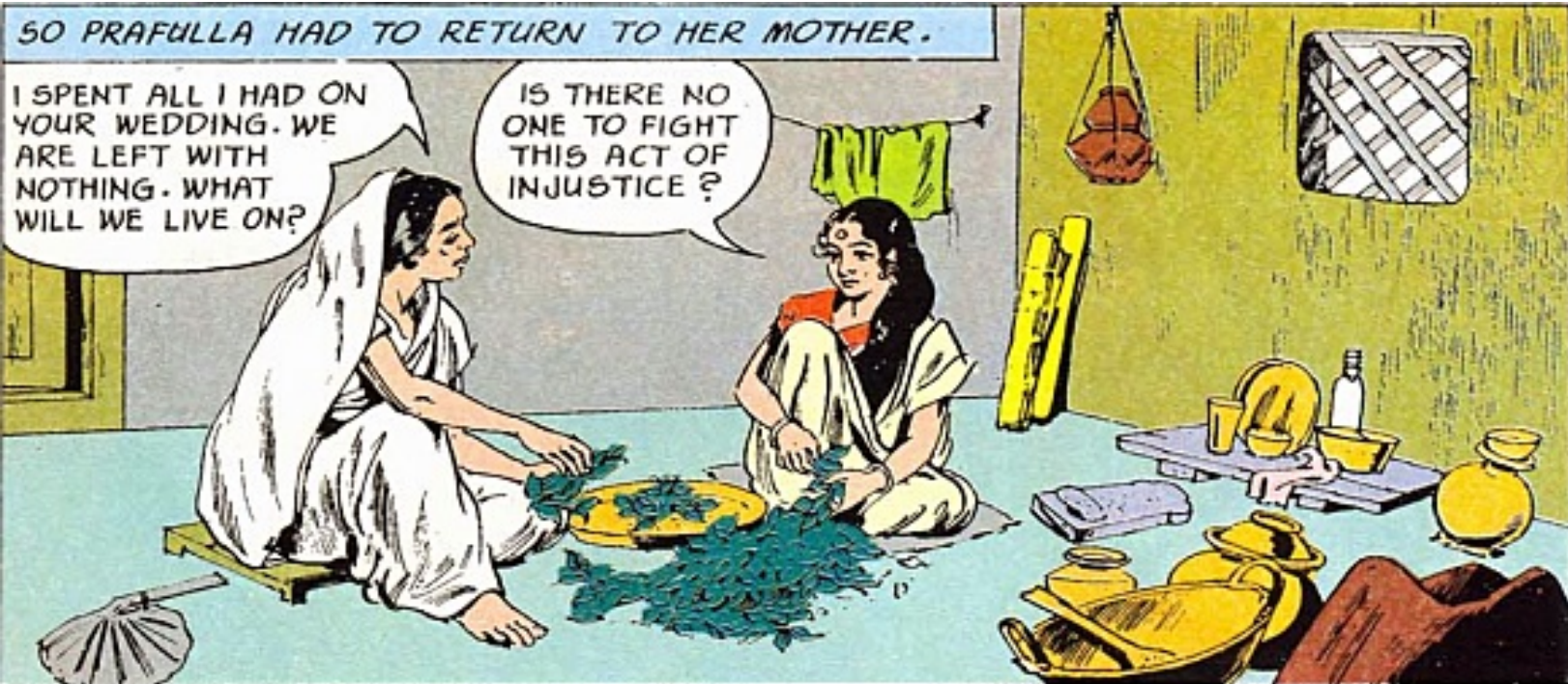


THERE CAN BE NO SMOKE WITHOUT FIRE.

SO PRAFULLA HAD TO RETURN TO HER MOTHER.

I SPENT ALL I HAD ON YOUR WEDDING. WE ARE LEFT WITH NOTHING. WHAT WILL WE LIVE ON?

IS THERE NO ONE TO FIGHT THIS ACT OF INJUSTICE?



THERE IS ONE, MY DAUGHTER! BHAVANI PATHAK.

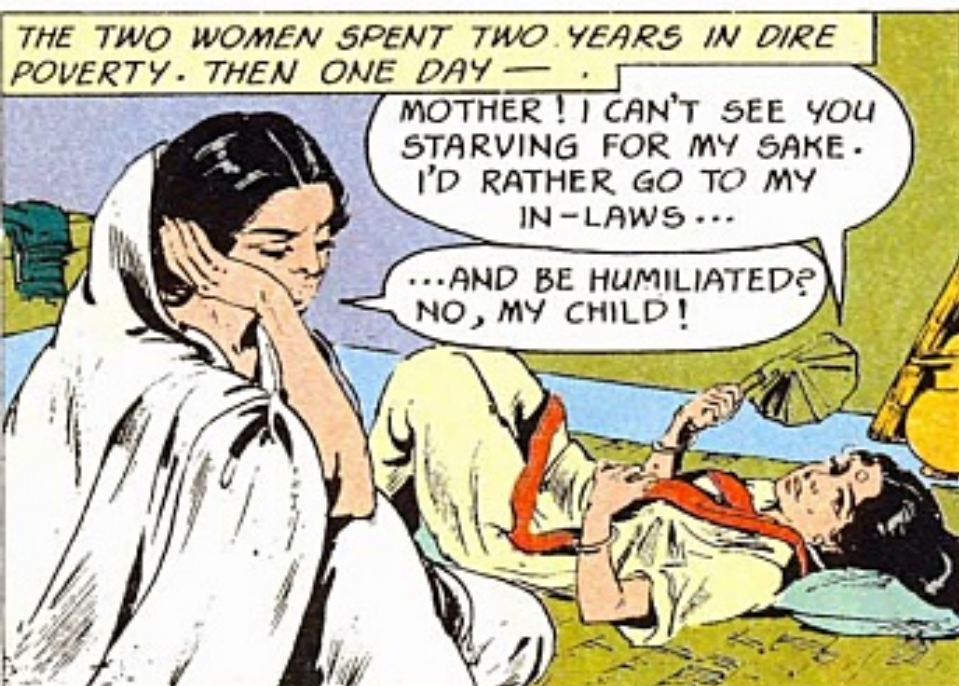
THAT DACOIT? NO, MOTHER. LET'S TAKE TO SPINNING FOR A LIVELIHOOD.



THE TWO WOMEN SPENT TWO YEARS IN DIRE POVERTY. THEN ONE DAY —

MOTHER! I CAN'T SEE YOU STARVING FOR MY SAKE. I'D RATHER GO TO MY IN-LAWS...

...AND BE HUMILIATED? NO, MY CHILD!



WHY NOT? THEY ARE OBLIGED TO MAINTAIN ME.



PRAFULLA MADE HER WAY TO HARABALLABH'S HOUSE AND STOOD BEFORE HER MOTHER-IN-LAW.

MOTHER! I HAVE COME TO STAY WITH YOU.

SHE IS SO BEAUTIFUL... AND LOOKS INNOCENT TOO. I WISH SHE COULD STAY HERE.

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE YOU WITH US, MY CHILD! BUT I FEAR SOCIETY.

DOES A MOTHER SHUN HER CHILD FOR FEAR OF SOCIETY?

SHE'S RIGHT!

WAIT HERE, MY CHILD! I'LL SPEAK TO YOUR FATHER-IN-LAW.

WHO COULD SHE BE?

AS SOON AS HER MOTHER-IN-LAW LEFT, PRAFULLA WAS USHERED INTO A ROOM BY THE BEAUTIFUL YOUNG GIRL.



MEANWHILE —

BRAJA'S FIRST
WIFE IS HERE.

THAT WOMAN!
THROW HER OUT.



HOW CAN I?
SHE IS A SWEET
CHILD AND...

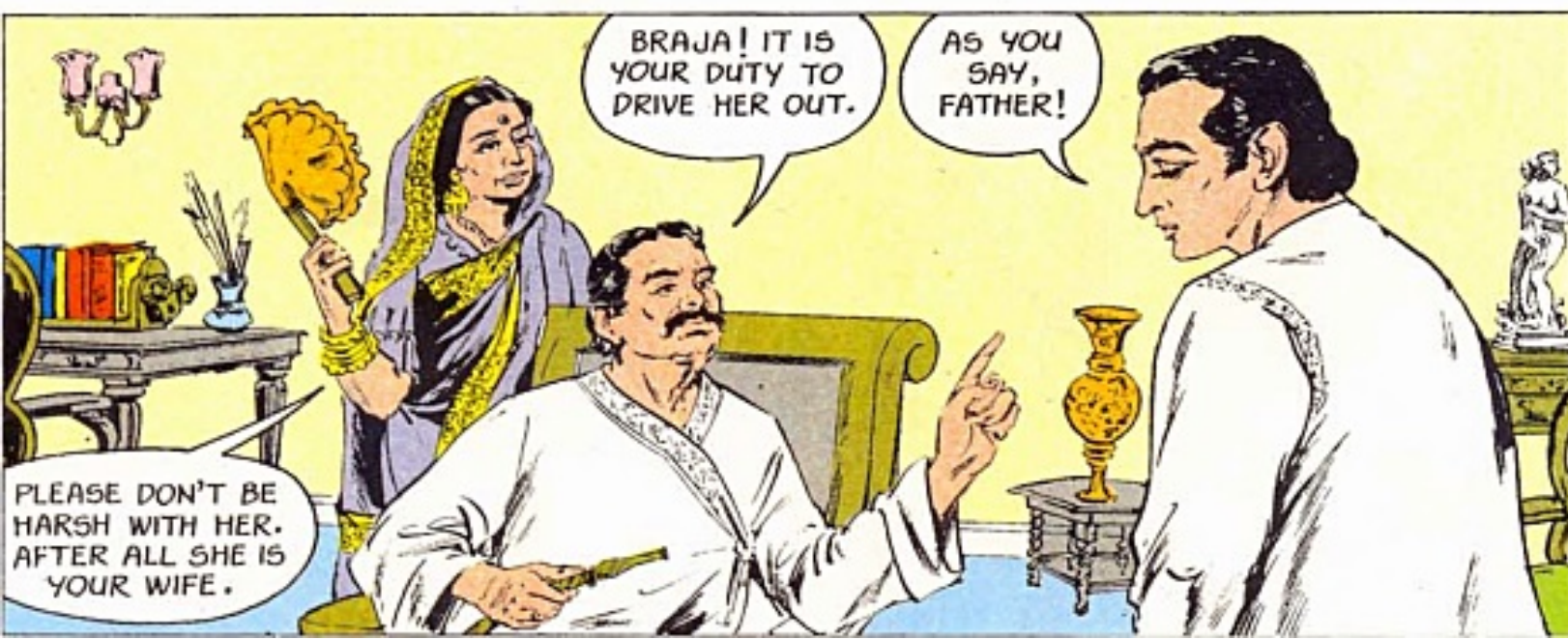
SO WHAT?
SHE CANNOT STAY
IN MY HOUSE.



BRAJA! IT IS
YOUR DUTY TO
DRIVE HER OUT.

AS YOU
SAY,
FATHER!

PLEASE DON'T BE
HARSH WITH HER.
AFTER ALL SHE IS
YOUR WIFE.



RAJESHWAR FOUND PRAFULLA IN THE ROOM WHERE SAGAR HAD LEFT HER. SHE CAME FORWARD AND TOUCHED HIS FEET.

FORGIVE ME, PRAFULLA.
I AM HELPLESS. MY
FATHER DOES NOT WANT
YOU HERE AND I CANNOT
MAINTAIN YOU.



I'LL SOON TAKE
UP A JOB,
HOWEVER.

THAT YOU
HAVE ACCEPTED
ME IS ENOUGH.



BRAJESHWAR BROUGHT OUT HIS DIAMOND
RING AND GAVE IT TO HER.

SELL IT AND USE THE
MONEY TILL I AM IN
A POSITION TO
MAINTAIN YOU.

IT HAS YOUR NAME
ENGRAVED ON IT.
I WON'T PART WITH
IT EVEN IF I HAVE
TO STARVE.



WHEN PRAFULLA RETURNED TO DURGAPUR, SHE FOUND HER MOTHER SERIOUSLY ILL.



ONE DARK NIGHT, A FEW DAYS AFTER HER MOTHER'S DEATH, FOUR MEN BROKE INTO PRAFULLA'S HOUSE.



THE ZAMINDAR'S MEN CARRIED PRAFULLA THROUGH AN UNUSED JUNGLE PATH TO AVOID ANY ENCOUNTER WITH THE VILLAGE FOLK. WHEN THEY WERE DEEP IN THE JUNGLE —

WE CAN UNTIE HER NOW. EVEN IF SHE SHOUTS, WHO WILL HEAR HER?

YOU'RE RIGHT.



SUDDENLY —

LOOK!
DACOITS!

RUN FOR
YOUR LIVES!



DROPPING THE PALANQUIN, THE MEN RAN AWAY.

THIS IS MY
CHANCE TO
ESCAPE.



AS SHE WANDERED ABOUT IN THE FOREST, PRAFULLA CAME UPON THE RUINS OF A HOUSE.



PRAFULLA BROUGHT HIM THE WATER AND HE DRANK IT.



THE NEXT MORNING, THE OLD MAN DIED. PRAFULLA DUG THE GROUND AT THE SPOT HE HAD INDICATED.



SHE BURIED THE DEAD BODY IN THE PIT FROM WHICH THE TREASURE HAD BEEN DUG. THEN SHE CARRIED THE PITCHER INSIDE AND HID IT IN A CORNER.

I AM HUNGRY. I'D BETTER GO AND BUY MYSELF SOME FOOD.



OUT IN THE FOREST AGAIN, SHE MET A PIOUS-LOOKING BRAHMAN.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, MOTHER*? THIS FOREST IS NO PLACE FOR A LADY LIKE YOU.

I HAVE RECENTLY COME TO LIVE HERE. IS THERE A MARKET NEAR BY?



* AN AFFECTIONATE TERM OF ADDRESS FOR WOMEN OF ALL AGES.



THE MARKET?
IT IS MILES AWAY.
BUT ... WHO ELSE
STAYS WITH YOU?

WHY ALL THESE
QUESTIONS, SIR?
I WANT TO BUY
SOME FOOD - I'M
HUNGRY.



YOU MAY BUY
WHAT YOU NEED
FROM MY
COTTAGE.

THANK YOU,
SIR!

AT HIS COTTAGE, PRAFULLA TOOK THE
PROVISIONS AND GAVE HIM THE GOLD COIN
SHE HAD BROUGHT WITH HER.



A GOLD COIN!
SORRY, I DON'T
HAVE THE CHANGE
FOR IT.

BUT I HAVE
ONLY SUCH
COINS.



ONLY SUCH COINS!
WELL, SHOW ME
YOUR HOUSE. I'LL
COLLECT MY
PAYMENT LATER.

WHY DOES HE
WANT TO SEE MY
HOUSE? PERHAPS
HE WANTS TO ROB
ME OF MY COINS.
NO. I SHOULDN'T
SHOW IT TO
HIM.



AS SOON AS BHAVANI PATHAK SOUNDED THE GONG, SOME FIFTY DACOITS ASSEMBLED IN FRONT OF PRAFULLA, WHO WAS BY NOW TREMBLING WITH FEAR.



BHAVANI PATHAK WAS POPULARLY KNOWN AS 'BHAVANI THAKUR' OR JUST 'THAKUR'.



AFTER THE DACOITS HAD GONE —

THERE! YOU CANNOT LEAVE THIS PLACE UNLESS I WISH IT. BUT TRUST ME — NO HARM WILL COME TO YOU.



AS THEY WALKED TO HER COTTAGE, PRAFULLA TOLD HIM HER STORY BUT HID THE FACTS ABOUT HER MARRIAGE.



NOW THAT YOU KNOW ALL ABOUT THIS TREASURE, TELL ME WHAT TO DO WITH IT.

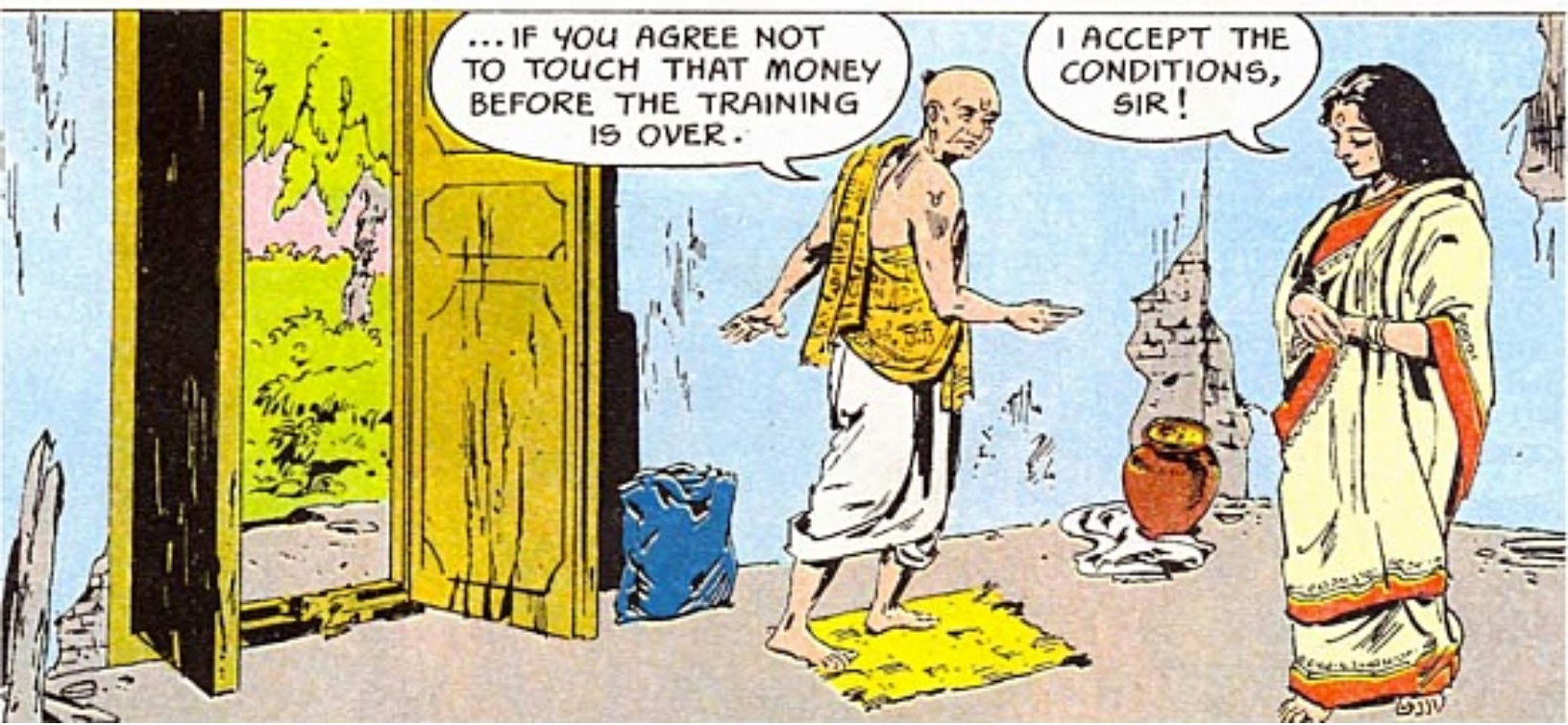
YOU NEED TRAINING TO HANDLE IT PROPERLY. THAT SHOULD TAKE SOM FIVE YEARS.

I CAN TRAIN YOU IF YOU ARE WILLING TO FOLLOW MY INSTRUCTIONS WITHOUT QUESTIONING THEM AND...



...IF YOU AGREE NOT TO TOUCH THAT MONEY BEFORE THE TRAINING IS OVER.

I ACCEPT THE CONDITIONS, SIR!



GOOD! I WILL GO NOW AND SEND A WOMAN HERE TO LOOK AFTER YOU.



AS BHAVANI PATHAK CAME OUT OF THE COTTAGE, HE MET HIS DEPUTY, RANGARAJ.

WHAT'S THE MATTER, RANGARAJ? YOU LOOK PERTURBED.

THE GOVERNMENT TAX-COLLECTORS HAVE LOOTED RANGPUR VILLAGE.



SHALL WE ATTACK THEM AND RETURN THE VILLAGERS' PROPERTY?

OF COURSE! NOW LISTEN, I'VE AT LAST FOUND A 'QUEEN' FOR US.



SHE WILL BE TRAINED TO RULE WITHIN FIVE YEARS. SHE HAS BEAUTY, MONEY AND COURAGE.



SOON AFTER BHAVANI PATHAK LEFT,
PRAFULLA'S INSTRUCTRESS ARRIVED.



I HAVE ONLY A SISTER. I'LL BRING HER HERE SOME DAY.



PRAFULLA'S TRAINING BEGAN THE NEXT MORNING.



THIS IS YOUR WARDROBE—FOUR SARIS—HIS ORDER.

THAT'S MORE THAN SUFFICIENT FOR ME:



WHILE NISHI TOOK CHARGE OF PRAFULLA'S PRACTICAL TRAINING, BHAVANI PATHAK INSTRUCTED HER ON VARIOUS ARTS AND SCIENCES.

NOW THAT YOU'VE LEARNT THE LANGUAGE YOU MAY TAKE UP LITERATURE. LET 'KUMARA SAMBHAVAM' BE THE FIRST BOOK.



THE NEXT MORNING —

THIS YEAR YOU ARE REQUIRED TO SLEEP ON THE BARE FLOOR.

ALL I NEED IS A PLACE TO SLEEP.



BHAVANI PATHAK EXPLAINED THE GITA + TO HER.

"ARJUNA!" SAYS KRISHNA, "WORK THEN FOR WORK'S SAKE, AND NOT FOR THE FRUIT THEREOF."



IN THE THIRD YEAR —

WRESTLING DISCIPLINES BOTH BODY AND MIND.



IN THOSE FIVE YEARS PRAFULLA'S TRAINING WAS COMPLETE.

NOW YOU CAN DEAL
WITH ANY SITUATION
WITH A CALM AND
COURAGEOUS MIND.

BUT WHAT SHALL
I DO NOW ?

YOU CAN DO
WHATEVER
YOU LIKE.

I'LL GIVE YOU
ALL MY MONEY
—PLEASE GIVE
UP DACOITY.

I AM NOT IN IT
FOR THE MONEY.
IT IS MY MEANS
OF FIGHTING
INJUSTICE.

THEN I WOULD LIKE TO
JOIN YOU AS YOUR
ASSISTANT.

I DID EXPECT
YOU TO JOIN
US; NOT AS
MY ASSIS-
TANT BUT
AS OUR
QUEEN!

PRAFULLA THUS BECAME THE LEADER OF THE DACOIT GANG. IN A SHORT PERIOD
SHE BECAME WELL-KNOWN ALL OVER BENGAL AS DEVI CHOUDHURANI *

* FEMININE OF CHOUDHURI, WHICH MEANS CHIEFTAIN.

MEANWHILE, IN HARABALLABH'S HOUSE —

SEVEN YEARS HAVE
GONE BY SINCE I LAST
SAW YOU, PRAFULLA.

THE PEOPLE OF YOUR
VILLAGE SWEAR THAT
YOU ARE DEAD. BUT
SOMETHING TELLS ME
THAT YOU ARE ALIVE.

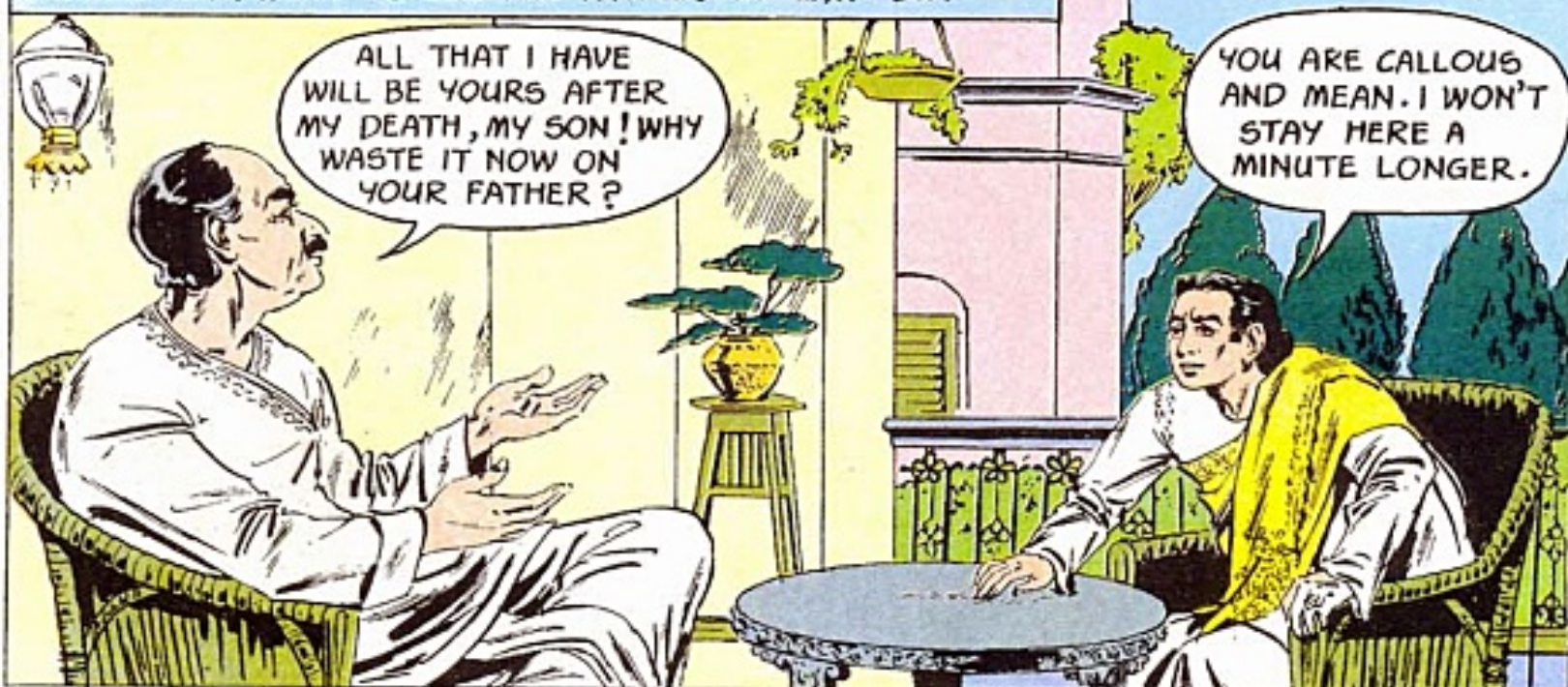
JUST THEN —

I AM RUINED, MY SON! ONCE
AGAIN THE DACOITS HAVE
LOOTED MY REVENUE
COLLECTIONS.

MY TAX ARREARS
HAVE MOUNTED TO
RS. 50,000. IF I DO
NOT PAY, I WILL
BE ARRESTED.

I WILL TRY TO
BORROW THE AMOUNT
FROM SAGAR'S FATHER.

BRAJESHWAR WENT TO SEE HIS FATHER-IN-LAW. BUT —



BRAJESHWAR RUSHED OUT IN A RAGE.
SAGAR RAN OUT AFTER HIM AND FELL
AT HIS FEET.



WHEN BRAJESHWAR TRIED TO FREE
HIS LEGS, SAGAR WAS HURT.





BRAJESHWAR THOUGHT IT WAS SAGAR'S VOICE AND LEFT IN A RAGE. SAGAR HARDLY NOTICED IT. SO FULL OF WONDER WAS SHE.



SAGAR TREMBLED AS DEVI CHAUDHURANI APPEARED THROUGH THE GATE.

DON'T BE AFRAID!
I COME AS YOUR
FRIEND.

I AM AN UNFORTUNATE GIRL,
DEVI! I... OH! PRAFULLA.
IT'S YOU!

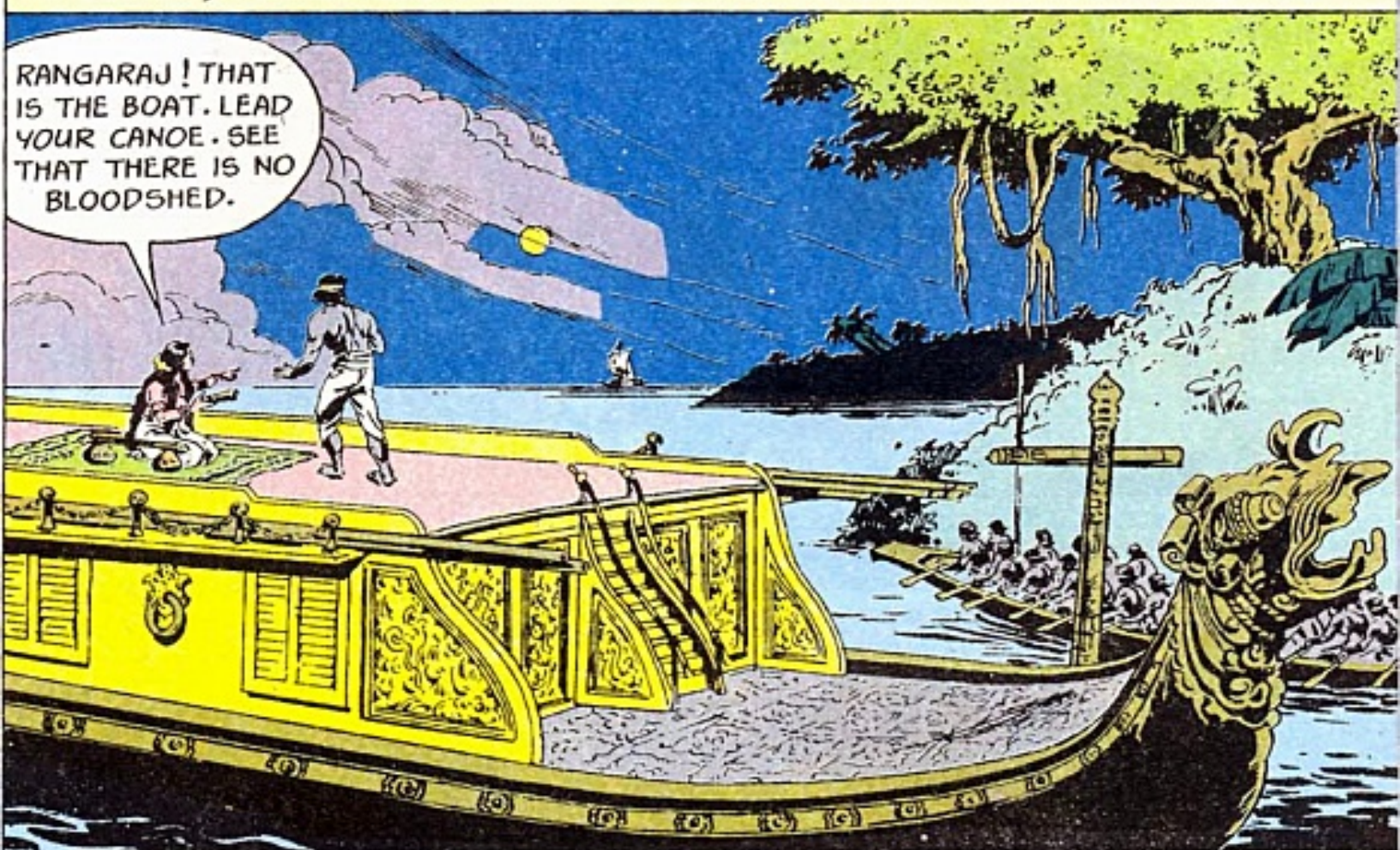


NO, SAGAR! PRAFULLA IS
DEAD. NOW LET'S HURRY,
WE HAVE TO FULFIL OUR
VOW.



THAT NIGHT, A BARGE WAS ANCHORED ON THE BANK OF THE RIVER TRISROTA.

RANGARAJ! THAT IS THE BOAT. LEAD YOUR CANOE. SEE THAT THERE IS NO BLOODSHED.

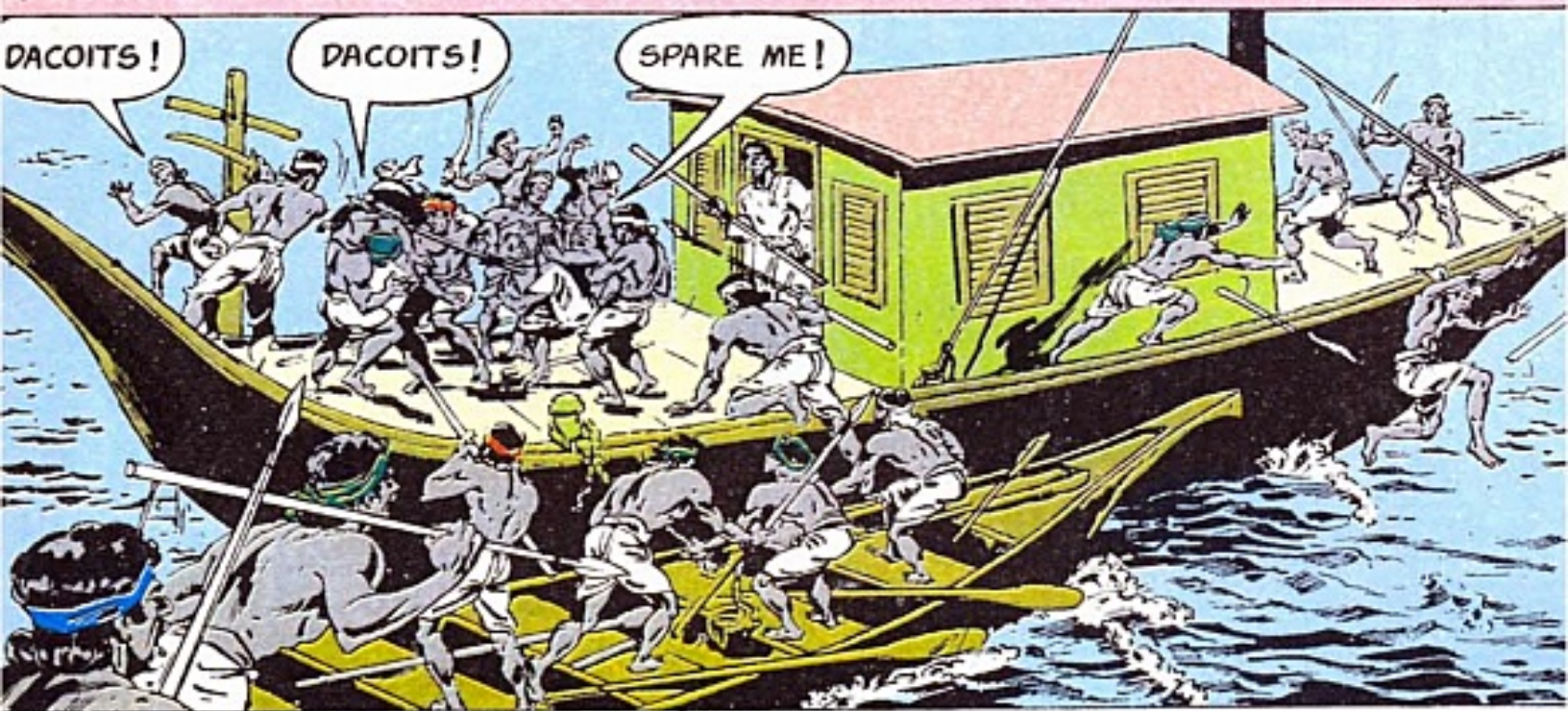


RANGARAJ CAME TO HIS CANOE AND GAVE ORDERS.

...REMEMBER, NO KILLING. JUST TIE THEM UP.



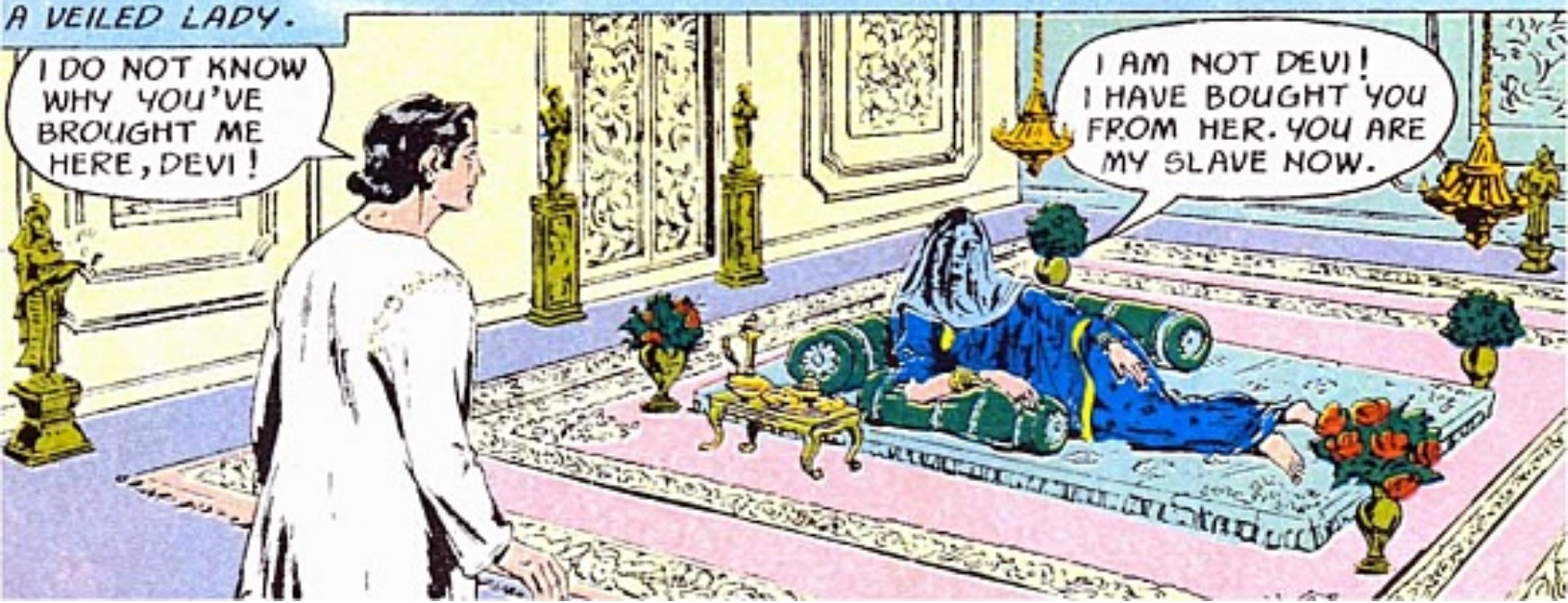
AS SOON AS RANGARAU'S CANOE CAUGHT UP WITH THE BOAT, HIS MEN JUMPED ONTO IT

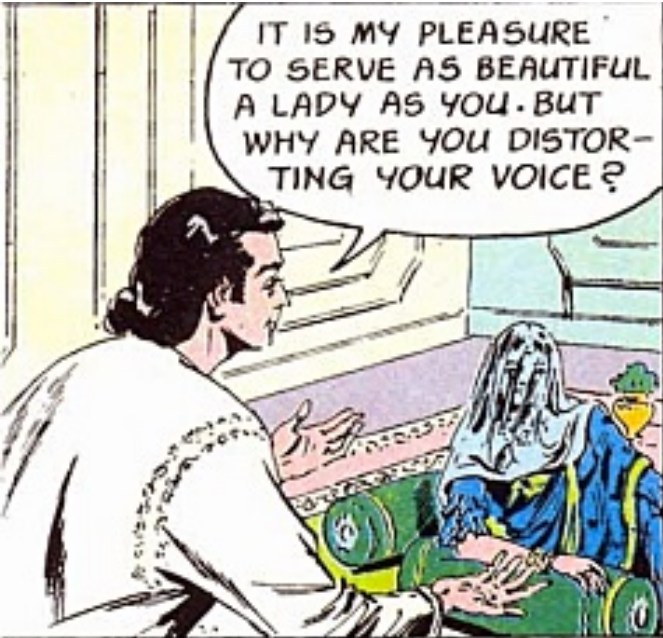


WITHIN A SHORT TIME, THE DACOITS TIED UP ALL THE BOATMEN AND CAUGHT HOLD OF BRAJESHWAR.

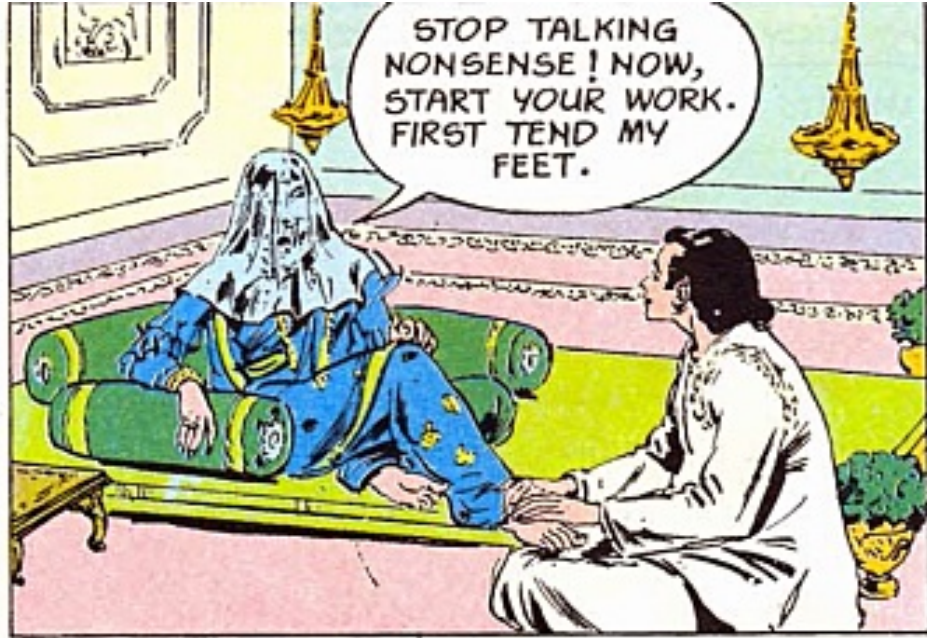


BRAJESHWAR WAS LED TO THE WAITING BARGE WHERE HE WAS LEFT IN FRONT OF A VEILED LADY.





IT IS MY PLEASURE TO SERVE AS BEAUTIFUL A LADY AS YOU. BUT WHY ARE YOU DISTORTING YOUR VOICE?



STOP TALKING NONSENSE! NOW, START YOUR WORK. FIRST TEND MY FEET.

AS SOON AS BRAJESHWAR TOUCHED HER FEET, THE LADY REMOVED HER VEIL WITH A LAUGH.



OH!... SAGAR!

MY VOW HAS BEEN FULFILLED.

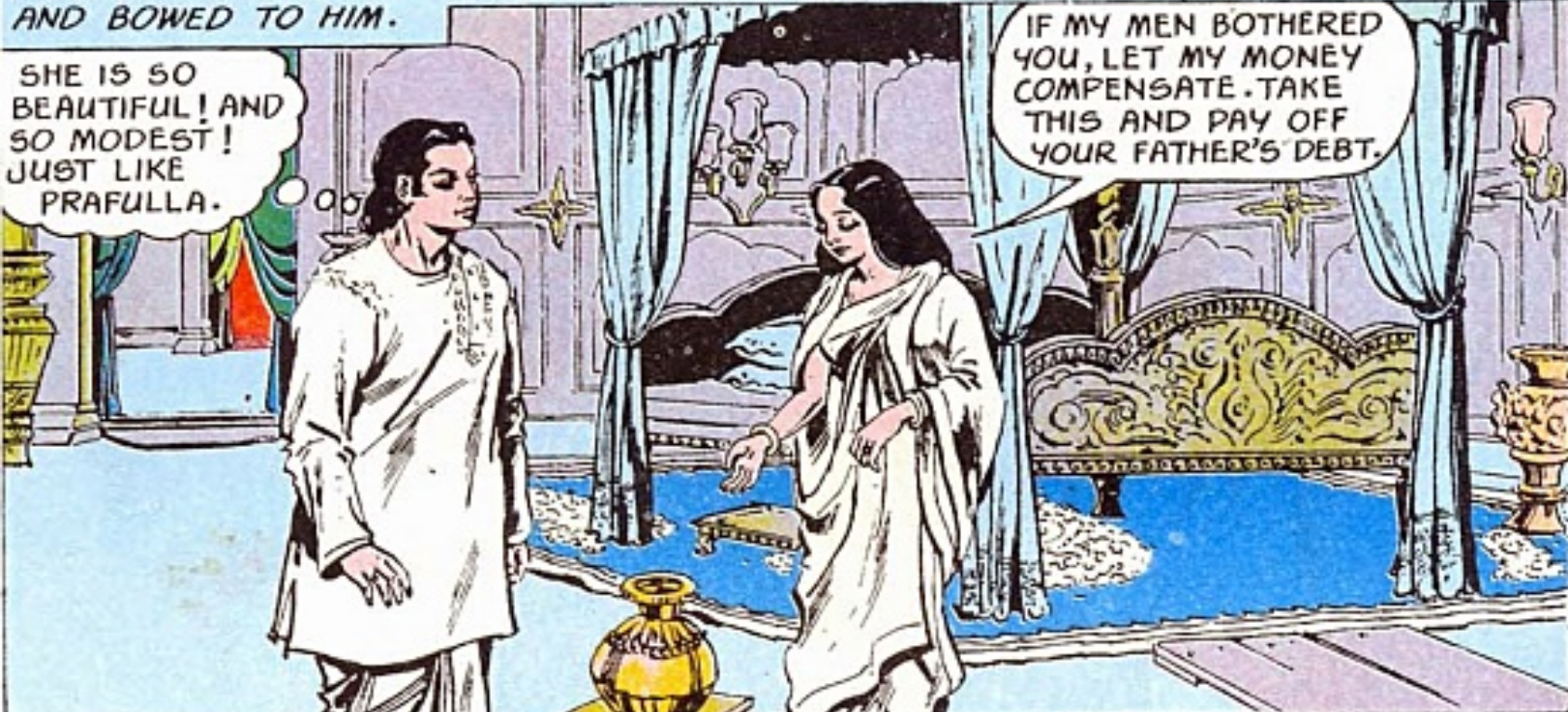


BUT HOW DID YOU COME HERE?

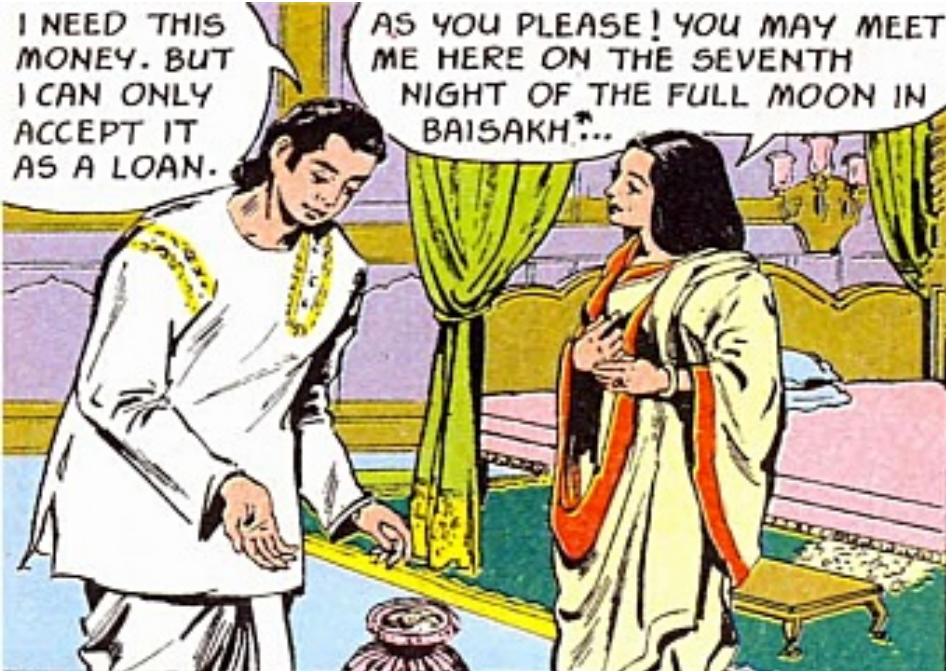
DEVI IS MY COUSIN. NOW LET US GO TO MEET HER.

BRAJESHWAR WAS LED TO DEVI IN ANOTHER CABIN. DEVI GOT UP FROM HER SEAT AND BOWED TO HIM.

SHE IS SO BEAUTIFUL! AND SO MODEST! JUST LIKE PRAFULLA.



IF MY MEN BOTHERED YOU, LET MY MONEY COMPENSATE. TAKE THIS AND PAY OFF YOUR FATHER'S DEBT.



I NEED THIS MONEY. BUT I CAN ONLY ACCEPT IT AS A LOAN.

AS YOU PLEASE! YOU MAY MEET ME HERE ON THE SEVENTH NIGHT OF THE FULL MOON IN BAISAKH...



...AND REPAY THE LOAN. BUT TAKE THIS AS A GIFT.

DEVI TOOK OFF HER RING AND PUT IT ON BRAJESHWAR'S FINGER.

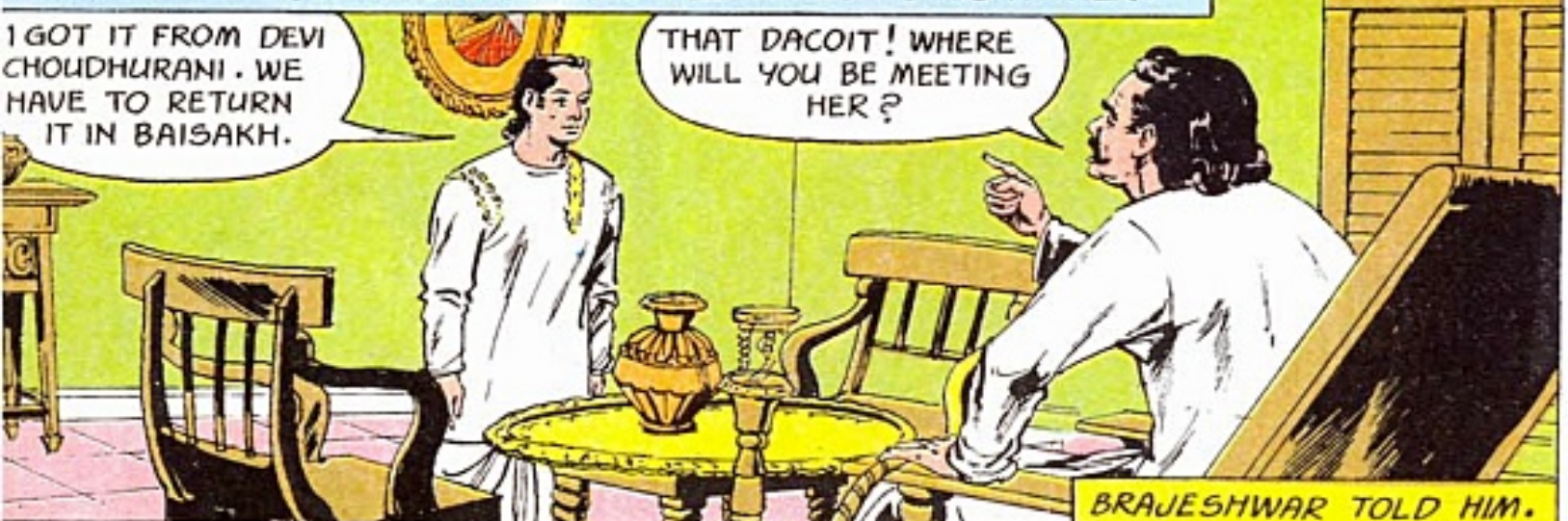
A LITTLE LATER, AS BRAJESHWAR WAS RETURNING HOME WITH SAGAR —



MY NAME ENGRAVED ON IT! SAGAR, TELL ME! WHO IS THIS DEVI? SHE COULDN'T BE...

SHE IS PRAFULLA! I RECOGNISED HER THE MOMENT I SAW HER.

BACK AT HOME, BRAJESHWAR GAVE THE MONEY TO HIS FATHER.



I GOT IT FROM DEVI CHOUDHURANI. WE HAVE TO RETURN IT IN BAISAKH.

THAT DACOIT! WHERE WILL YOU BE MEETING HER?

BRAJESHWAR TOLD HIM.



MEANWHILE, DEVI MET BHAVANI PATHAK.



AS THE MONTH OF BAISAKH DREW NEAR, HARABALLABH WENT TO THE DISTRICT COLLECTOR'S OFFICE.



UNAWARE OF HIS FATHER'S MOVE, BRAJESHWAR WENT TO MEET DEVI ON THE APPOINTED DAY.



DEVI TOLD HIM THE WHOLE STORY.



BUT I HAVE TO
LET THEM ARREST
ME. OTHERWISE
YOUR FATHER
WOULD BE IN
DANGER.

WHAT!... MY
FATHER, AN
INFORMER?

THE CONVERSATION WAS INTERRUPTED BY THE BOOM OF GUNS. RANGARAJ CAME
RUNNING IN.

RANI! THAKUR
HAS COME WITH
OUR MEN TO
PROTECT YOU.

ASK HIM TO GO BACK,
RANGARAJ! AND YOU GO
TO THE BRITISH WITH
A WHITE FLAG!

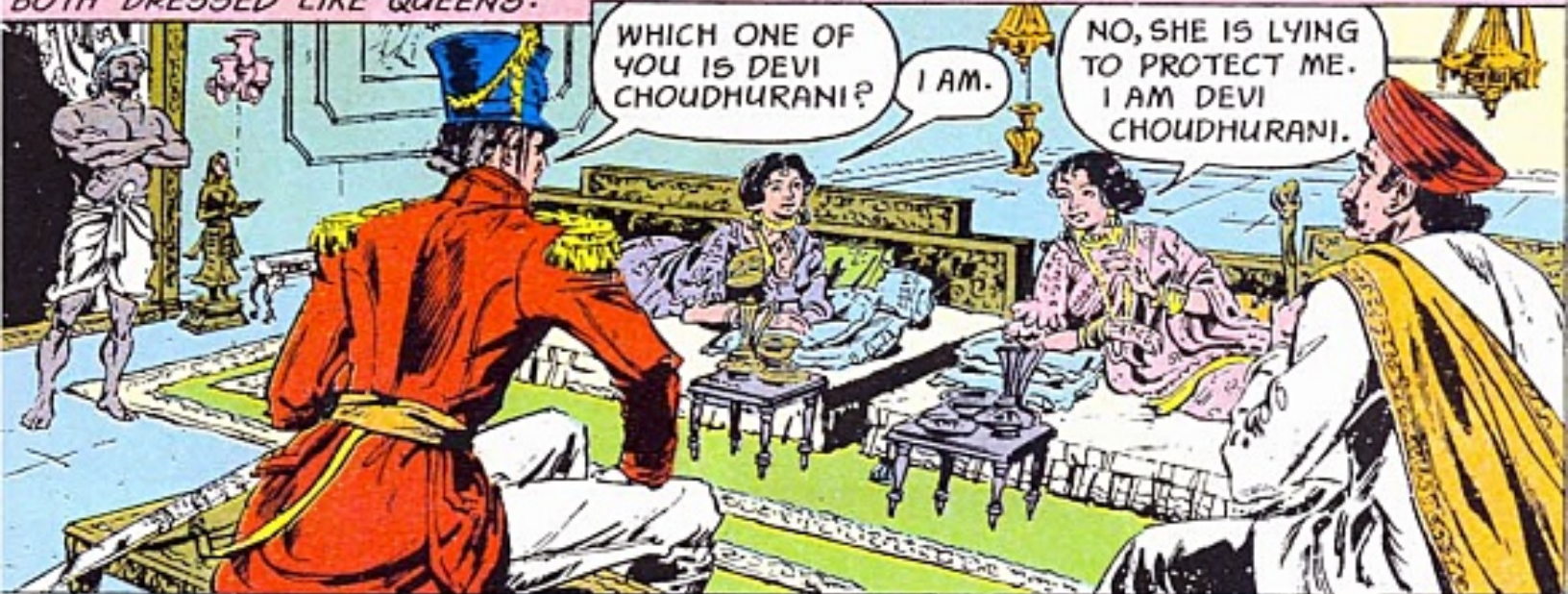
BOOM
BOOM

RANGARAJ, LOOK
AT THE SKY. GOD
IS WITH ME.

AFTER CONVINCING BHAVANI PATHAK OF DEVI'S INTENTIONS, RANGARAJ WENT TO LIEUTENANT BRENNAN WITH THE WHITE FLAG.



AFTER ENSURING THAT HIS BOATS HAD SURROUNDED DEVI'S BARGE, LIEUTENANT BRENNAN, ALONG WITH RANGARAJ AND HARABALLABH, ENTERED IT. HE MET NISHI AND HER SISTER BOTH DRESSED LIKE QUEENS.



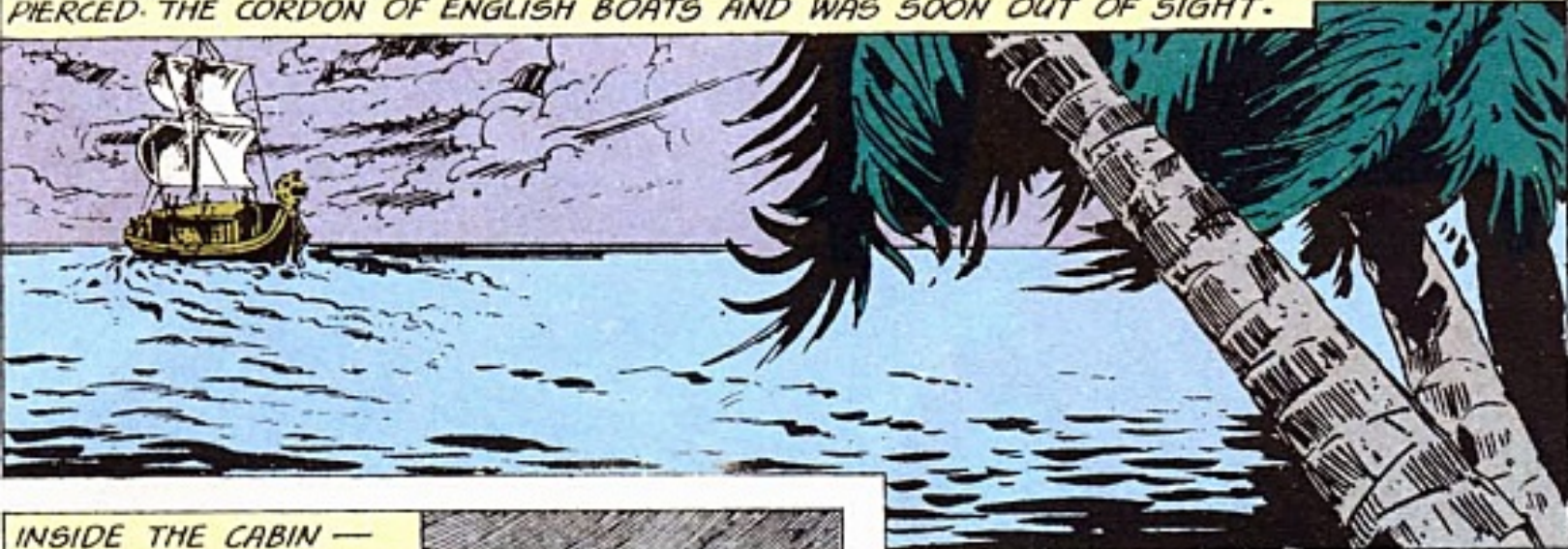
A FEW MOMENTS LATER, DEVI AND BRAJESHWAR ENTERED.



TO GAIN TIME, THE THREE LADIES WENT ON CONFUSING THE LIEUTENANT.

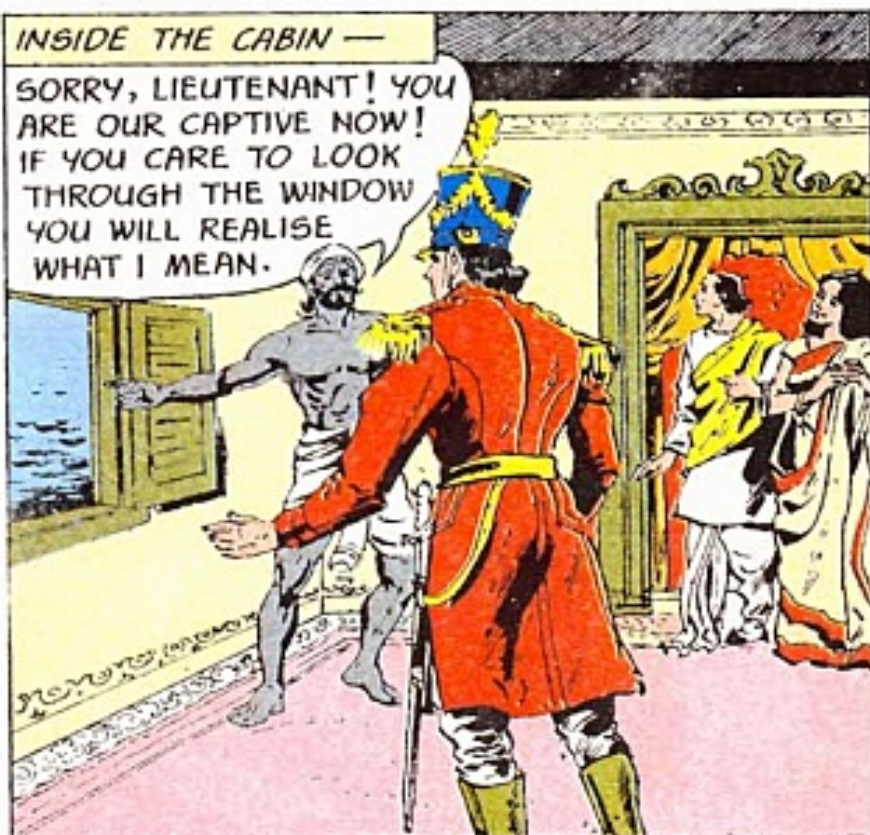


AS DEVI HAD ANTICIPATED, A VIOLENT STORM SOON BROKE OUT. DEVI'S BOATMEN WERE PREPARED FOR IT. BEFORE ANYONE COULD REALISE WHAT WAS HAPPENING, HER BARGE PIERCED THE CORDON OF ENGLISH BOATS AND WAS SOON OUT OF SIGHT.



INSIDE THE CABIN —

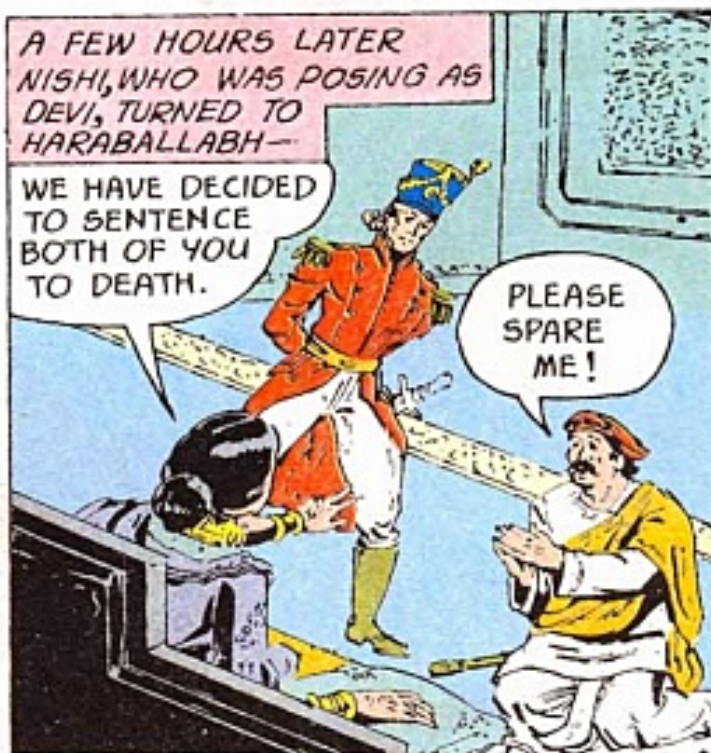
SORRY, LIEUTENANT! YOU ARE OUR CAPTIVE NOW! IF YOU CARE TO LOOK THROUGH THE WINDOW YOU WILL REALISE WHAT I MEAN.



A FEW HOURS LATER NISHI, WHO WAS POSING AS DEVI, TURNED TO HARABALLABH—

WE HAVE DECIDED TO SENTENCE BOTH OF YOU TO DEATH.

PLEASE SPARE ME!





THE NEXT MORNING, THE GALE STOPPED AND THE BARGE WAS ANCHORED. DEVI RELEASED BOTH HER CAPTIVES.



THE NEXT DAY, PRAFULLA AND BRAJESHWAR TOOK LEAVE OF THE OTHERS.



RANGARAJ! TAKE CHARGE OF MY MONEY AND CONTINUE TO HELP THE POOR. FAREWELL TO ALL OF YOU.

LATER IN THE AFTERNOON, AT HARABALLABH'S HOUSE —



BRAJA! HOW DID YOU GET BACK THIS LOST TREASURE?

I FOUND HER BY GOD'S GRACE. BUT YOU HAVE TO MAKE FATHER AGREE.

AND SAGAR CAME RUNNING IN...



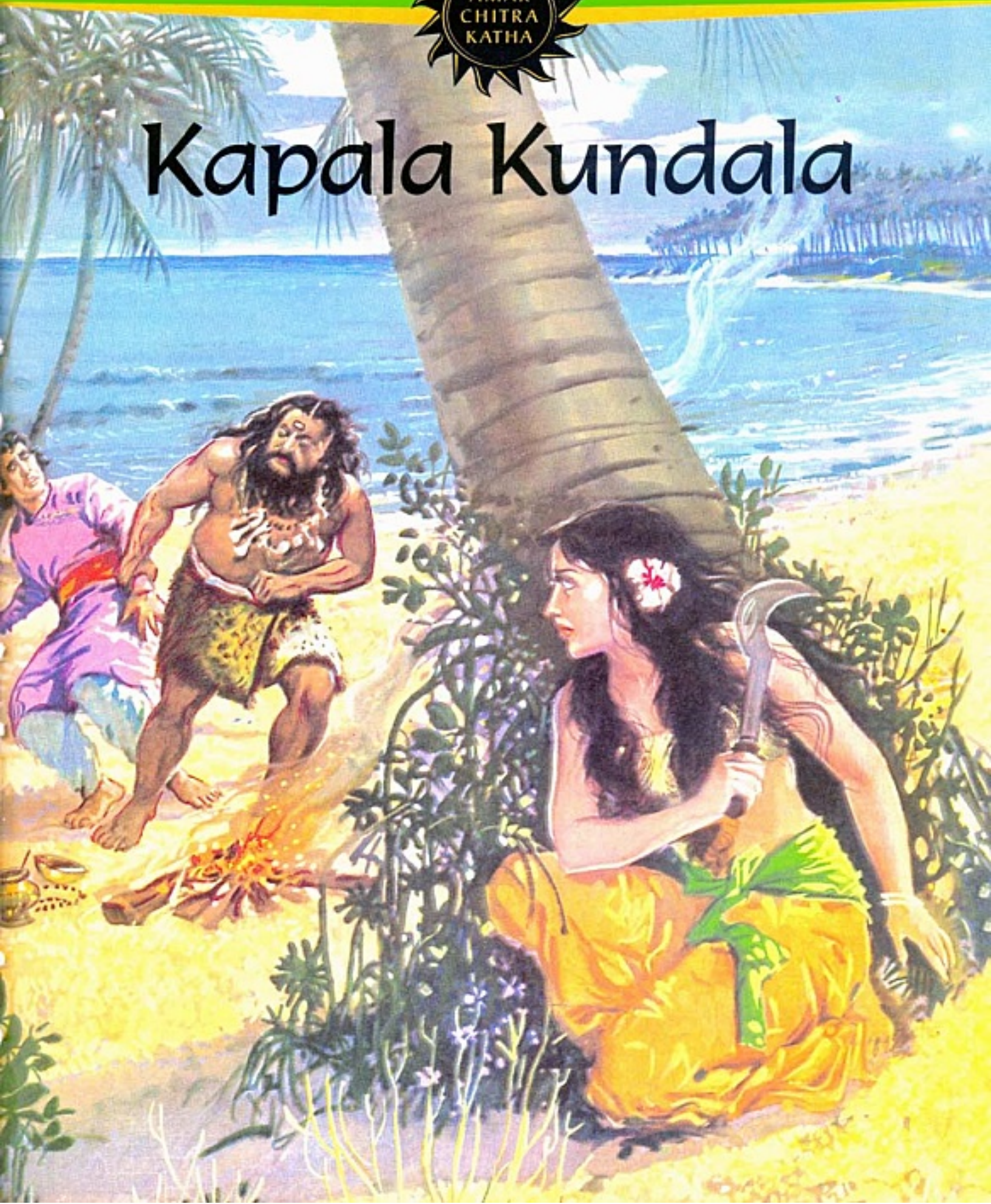
YOU LOOK LIKE A GODDESS, DEVI!

SHH! SAGAR! DEVI IS DEAD AND SO IS PRAFULLA. I AM THE NEW BRIDE.

HER TRAINING IN THE FOREST HELPED PRAFULLA TO BECOME AN IDEAL HOUSEWIFE. EVERYONE, INCLUDING, HARABALLABH DOTTED ON HER. AS FOR BHAVANI PATHAK, HE WAS SO DEJECTED THAT HE SUBMITTED HIMSELF TO THE AUTHORITIES AND WAS DEPORTED.



Kapala Kundala





Illustrated Classics From India

Kapala Kundala

Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay (1838–1894) is considered to be one of the greatest writers in the world of Bengali literature. He wrote *Kapala Kundala*, his second novel, when he was only 28 years old.

It is said that when Bankim Chandra lived in Kanthi, on the coast of southwest Bengal, a *kapalik* (a *Tantric* worshipper of Kali or Shiva) frequently visited him. The mystery surrounding the *kapalik* made a deep impression on Bankim. He conceived the idea of writing a novel about a girl brought up by a *kapalik* in complete isolation from the civilised world.

The name *Kapala Kundala* has been taken from the Sanskrit play, *Malati-Madhava*. In the play, Kapala is the associate of the evil *kapalik*, Aghora Ghanta, and she is as heinous as her mentor. But although our heroine in *Kapala Kundala* was also brought up by an evil *kapalik*, she is full human affection and kindness.

This story is full of romantic and interesting characters. While presenting this fascinating tale of romance, certain events and characters have been omitted and the story has been modified to make it suitable for children.

Script: Debrani Mitra Illustrations: Souren Roy

KAPALA KUNDALA



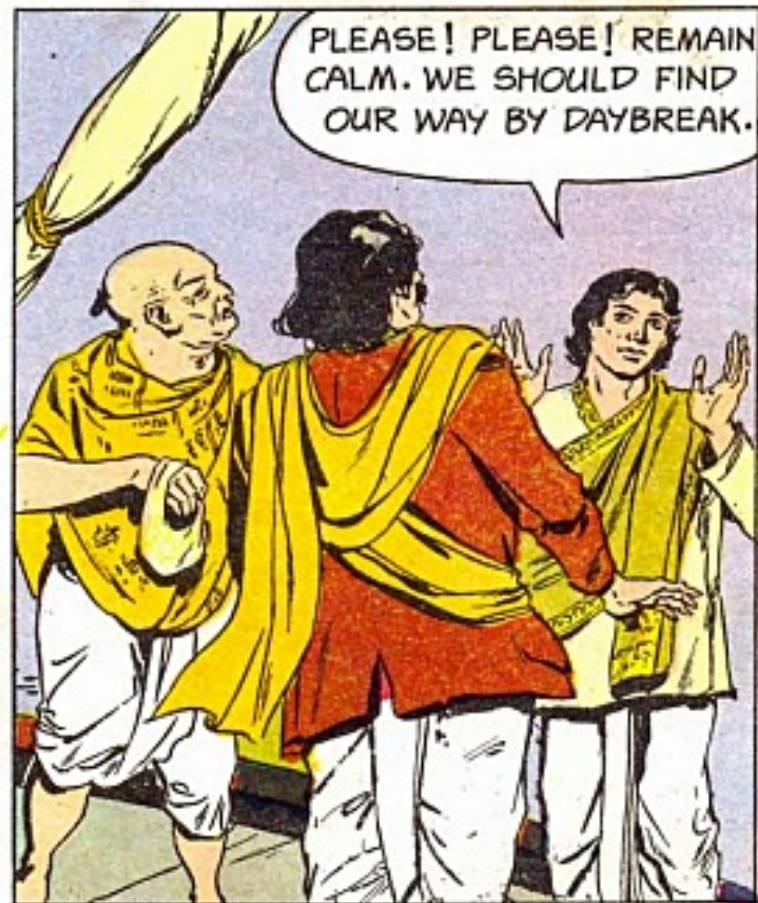
DURING THE REIGN OF AKBAR THE GREAT, A LONE BOAT WAS RETURNING FROM A VOYAGE OF PILGRIMAGE TO GANGASAGAR.* A DENSE FOG HAD DESCENDED AND, THOUGH IT WAS EARLY IN THE MORNING, NOTHING COULD BE SEEN FOR MILES. THE BOAT HAD LOST ITS WAY.

OH GOD! WE ARE LOST IF WE STRIKE AGAINST A ROCK!

IT WILL BE WORSE IF WE ARE WASHED ASHORE. THEN WE'LL BE AT THE MERCY OF WILD BEASTS IN THE JUNGLES.



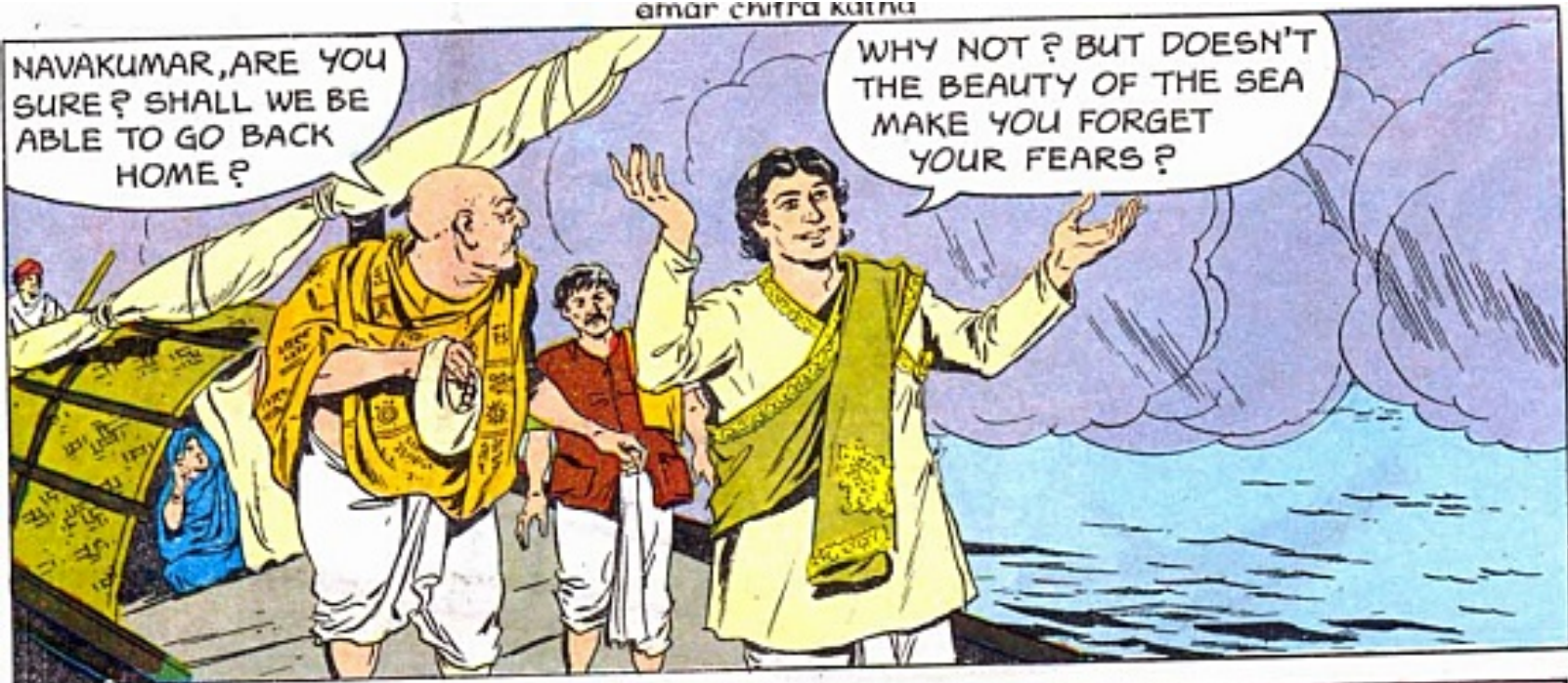
PLEASE! PLEASE! REMAIN CALM. WE SHOULD FIND OUR WAY BY DAYBREAK.



* THE MOUTH OF THE RIVER HOOGHLY

NAVAKUMAR, ARE YOU SURE? SHALL WE BE ABLE TO GO BACK HOME?

WHY NOT? BUT DOESN'T THE BEAUTY OF THE SEA MAKE YOU FORGET YOUR FEARS?



THE FOG GRADUALLY BEGAN TO CLEAR.

LOOK AHEAD!

THE SHORE! THE SHORE!

WE'RE SAFE!



THE TALL TREES ENCIRCLING THE SILVERY WATERS ARE LOVELY TO BEHOLD.



THEY SAILED TOWARDS THE SHORE AND DISEMBARKED.

WE ARE TIRED AND HUNGRY. LET US EAT FIRST AND THEN REST.

BUT HOW SHALL WE COOK? WE HAVE NO FIRE-WOOD.



THERE MUST BE
PLENTY OF WOOD
IN THAT VAST
FOREST.

BUT WHO WILL GO
THERE AND RISK
BEING KILLED BY
TIGERS?

NAVAKUMAR IS A
BRAVE YOUNG MAN.
HE'LL DO IT.

I WILL TRY. BUT
WILL SOMEONE COME
WITH ME?

NO ONE ELSE DARED TO GO. SO NAVA-
KUMAR WENT INTO THE FOREST ALONE.



I HOPE I'LL
BE ABLE TO
CARRY ALL
THIS WOOD.



THE STORMY WATERS UNNERVED THEM AND THE PASSENGERS RUSHED TO THE BOAT.



THEY WERE DRIVEN A LONG WAY OFF THE COAST AND THEY DECIDED NOT TO COME BACK FOR NAVAKUMAR.



POOR NAVAKUMAR!
I HOPE HE MANAGED
TO FIND SOME
SHELTER.

IT WAS VERY
FOOLHARDY OF
HIM TO HAVE
DARED ENTER
THAT FOREST.

IT WAS LATE IN THE EVENING WHEN NAVA-KUMAR RETURNED TO FIND HIS COMPANIONS GONE.



NO SIGN OF
THEM! THEY
HAVE BEEN
SWEEP AWAY
BY THE SEA!

OR, PERHAPS, THEY'VE
DESERTED ME! ANYWAY,
I MUST FIND
SHELTER FOR
THE NIGHT.



LOOKING FOR SHELTER IN THE FOREST, NAVAKUMAR SAW A FIRE FLICKERING IN THE DISTANCE.



AS HE DREW NEARER, HE SAW A KAPALIK* MEDITATING BEFORE THE FIRE.



AFTER A WHILE —



THE KAPALIK TOOK NAVAKUMAR TO HIS COTTAGE.



NAVAKUMAR WAS SO TIRED THAT HE SLEPT TILL THE NEXT EVENING.



* A VOTARY OF THE GODDESS KALI WHO OFFERS HUMAN SACRIFICE

WHEN HE FINALLY WOKE UP —



HE WENT OUT IN SEARCH OF FOOD.



BUT HE LOST HIS WAY IN THE FOREST.



SUDDENLY —



NAVAKUMAR FOLLOWED HER AS IF IN A TRANCE. AFTER LEADING HIM TO THE COTTAGE, THE BEAUTIFUL MAIDEN STEPPED BEHIND A BUSH AND DISAPPEARED INTO THE FOREST.



THE NEXT DAY —



THEY STARTED WALKING THROUGH THE FOREST. SUDDENLY NAVAKUMAR HEARD SOMEONE WHISPER BEHIND HIM —



THE KAPALIK HEARD THE LOW WHISPERS.



THE GIRL FLED LIKE A FRIGHTENED DEER.



BUT THE KAPALIK CAUGHT HOLD OF NAVAKUMAR.



THE KAPALIK DRAGGED HIM AWAY TO HIS PLACE OF MEDITATION...



...AND BOUND HIM FIRMLY.



AFTER HIS PREPARATIONS FOR THE SACRIFICE WERE COMPLETED —



THE KAPALIK WENT AWAY TO LOOK FOR THE SCIMITAR...



... WHEN KAPALA KUNDALA SUDDENLY APPEARED WITH THE SCIMITAR!



KAPALA KUNDALA THEN LED NAVAKUMAR TO A TEMPLE IN THE FOREST AND TOLD THE PRIEST THERE THE WHOLE STORY.



THE PRIEST TOOK NAVAKUMAR INTO THE TEMPLE.



POOR GIRL! I WILL GLADLY PROTECT HER. SHE HAS SAVED MY LIFE. AND SHE'S BEAUTIFUL AND GOOD!



KAPALA KUNDALA WAS CALLED IN.

DAUGHTER, YOU ARE ALL ALONE AND AT THE MERCY OF THE KAPALIK. MARRY THIS YOUNG MAN AND LEAVE THE FOREST WITH HIM.

I WOULD BE HAPPY TO DO SO.



SO NAVAKUMAR AND KAPALA KUNDALA BECAME HUSBAND AND WIFE.



THE NEXT DAY, THE PRIEST ESCORTED THEM TO THE NEAREST VILLAGE.

HERE IS SOME MONEY FOR YOUR EXPENSES ON THE WAY. HIRE A PALANQUIN FOR KAPALA KUNDALA.

THANK YOU! I WILL NEVER FORGET YOUR KINDNESS.

GOODBYE.



AFTER THE PRIEST HAD LEFT, A PALANQUIN WAS HIRED FOR KAPALA AND THEY CONTINUED THEIR JOURNEY.



I HOPE WE REACH THE NEXT VILLAGE SOON. MY FEET ARE ACHING....



GRADUALLY HE LOST PACE WITH THE PALANQUIN.

THEY'LL WAIT FOR ME AT THE VILLAGE INN. I CAN'T HURRY. I AM FAR TOO TIRED.



BUT BY NIGHTFALL NAVAKUMAR BECAME WORRIED. THE VILLAGE WAS NOWHERE IN SIGHT.

I HOPE KAPALA HAS ARRIVED SAFELY AT THE INN. I AM WORRIED ABOUT DACOITS.



HIS ANXIETY INCREASED WHEN HE STUMBLED UPON A BROKEN PALANQUIN.

KAPALA KUNDALA! IS IT YOU?



LOOKING INSIDE, HE SAW A LADY WHOSE HANDS AND FEET WERE BOUND.

PLEASE UNTIE
THESE ROPES.

OH! IT'S NOT
KAPALA!

MY SERVANTS HAD JUST
LEFT ME AND GONE AHEAD
TO MAKE PREPARA-
TIONS AT THE
VILLAGE INN...

...WHEN SUDDEN-
LY DACOITS
ATTACKED.

THEY TOOK AWAY
ALL MY BELONGINGS,
WHILE MY PALANQUIN-
BEARERS FLED.

HOW SHALL
I REACH
THE INN
NOW?

YOU CAN COME WITH ME. I AM
GOING TO THE INN TO JOIN MY
WIFE. I HOPE
SHE IS SAFE.

THE INN WAS, AFTER ALL, NOT VERY FAR AWAY, AND THEY SOON REACHED IT.

AH! MY WIFE HAS ARRIVED ALREADY. THANK GOD SHE IS SAFE.

MY MEN HAVE ARRIVED TOO. THEY'LL TAKE CARE OF ME.

LATER AT THE INN —

I DID NOT RECOGNISE HIM AT FIRST, BUT I AM SURE NOW. IT MUST BE HIM! I'LL SPEAK TO HIM AGAIN AND FIND OUT.

MY NAME IS MATI BIBI. I HAVE COME TO THANK YOU.

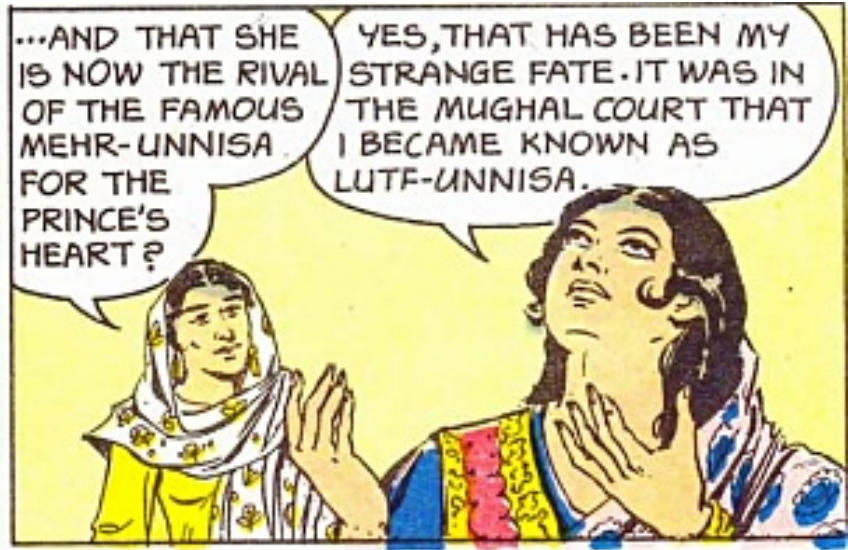
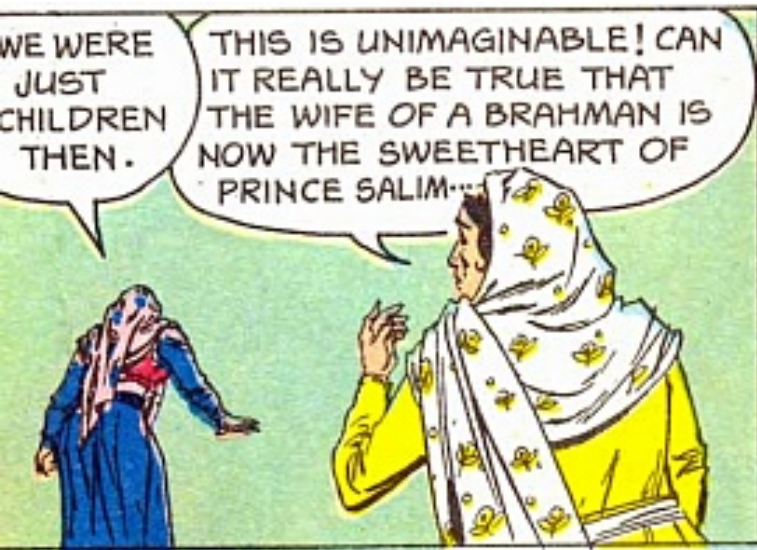
THIS IS MY WIFE, KAPALA KUNDALA. I AM NAVAKUMAR SHARMA OF SAPTAGRAM.

SO IT IS HIM!

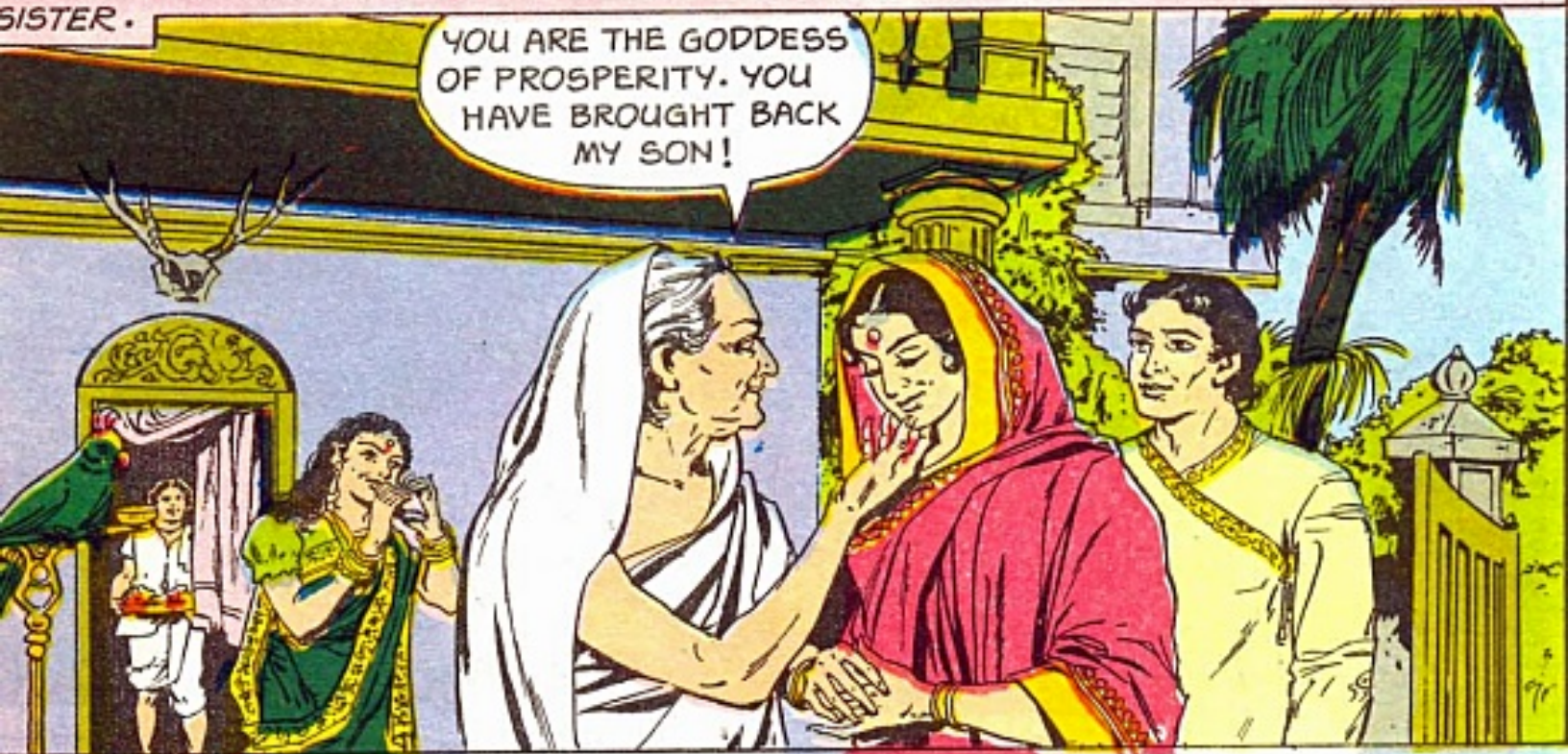
PLEASE ACCEPT THESE ORNAMENTS AS TOKENS OF MY GRATITUDE.

BUT THESE ARE VERY VALUABLE ORNAMENTS!





A FEW DAYS LATER, NAVAKUMAR ARRIVED AT SAPTAGRAM WITH HIS BRIDE. ON REACHING HOME, THEY RECEIVED A JOYOUS WELCOME FROM HIS MOTHER AND SISTER.



WHAT AN ODD NAME!
WE'LL CALL YOU
MRINMAYEE.



AT FIRST KAPALA KUNDALA WAS NOT HAPPY AT
SAPTAGRAM. SHE BECAME VERY QUIET AND
THOUGHTFUL.

ONE HAS TO WORK
ALL THE TIME HERE.
HOW I MISS MY CARE-
FREE LIFE IN THE
FOREST!



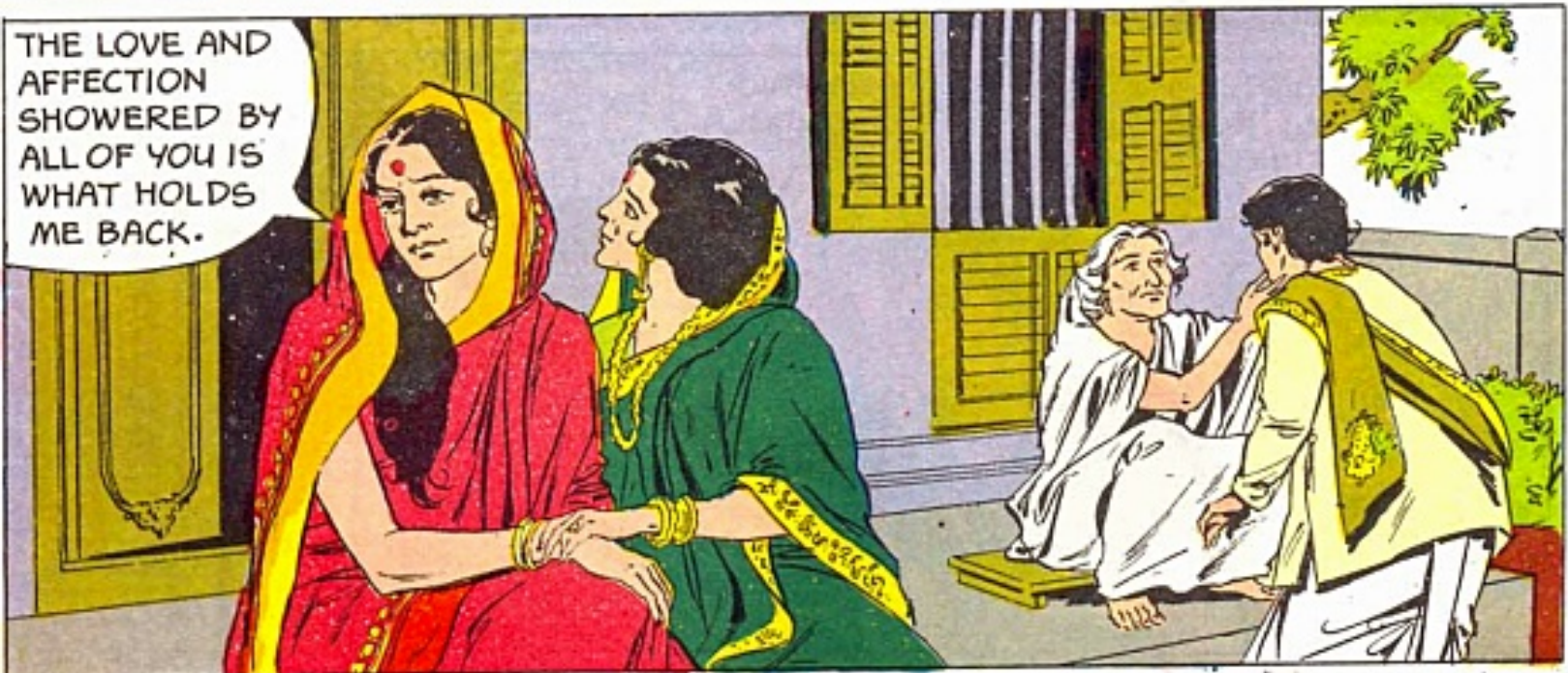
ONE DAY —

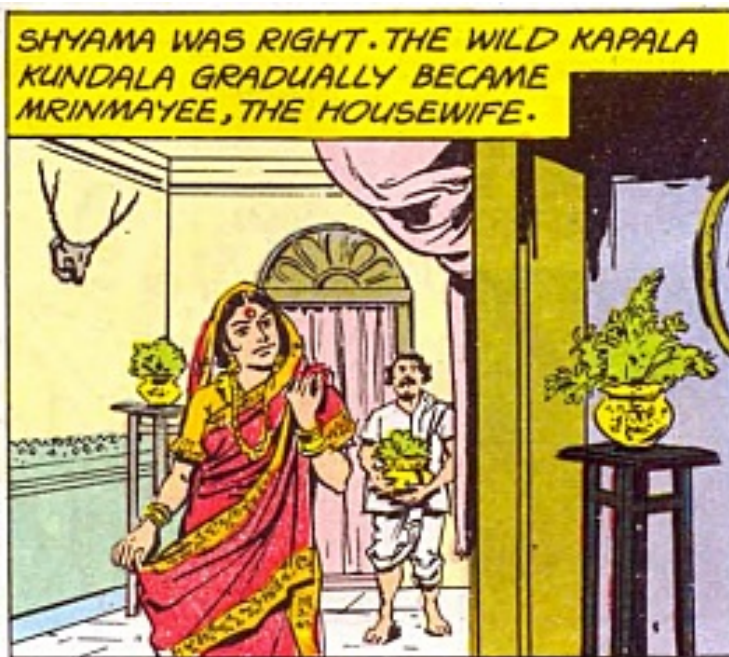
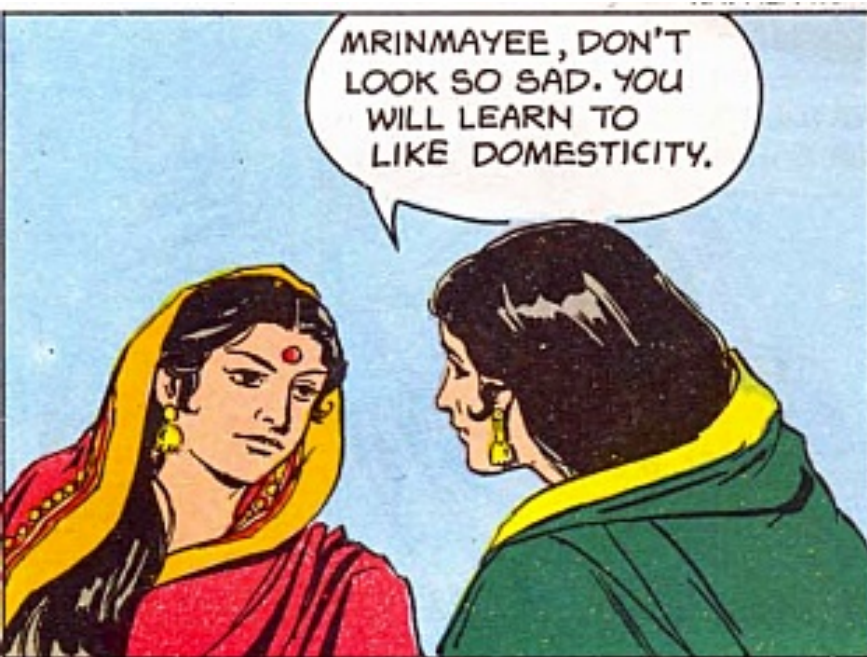
MRINMAYEE! WHY
ARE YOU SO QUIET?
I NEVER SEE YOU
SMILE.

I AM BORED WITH ALL
THESE DAILY CHORES.
I FEEL LIKE RUNNING
AWAY TO THE FOREST.

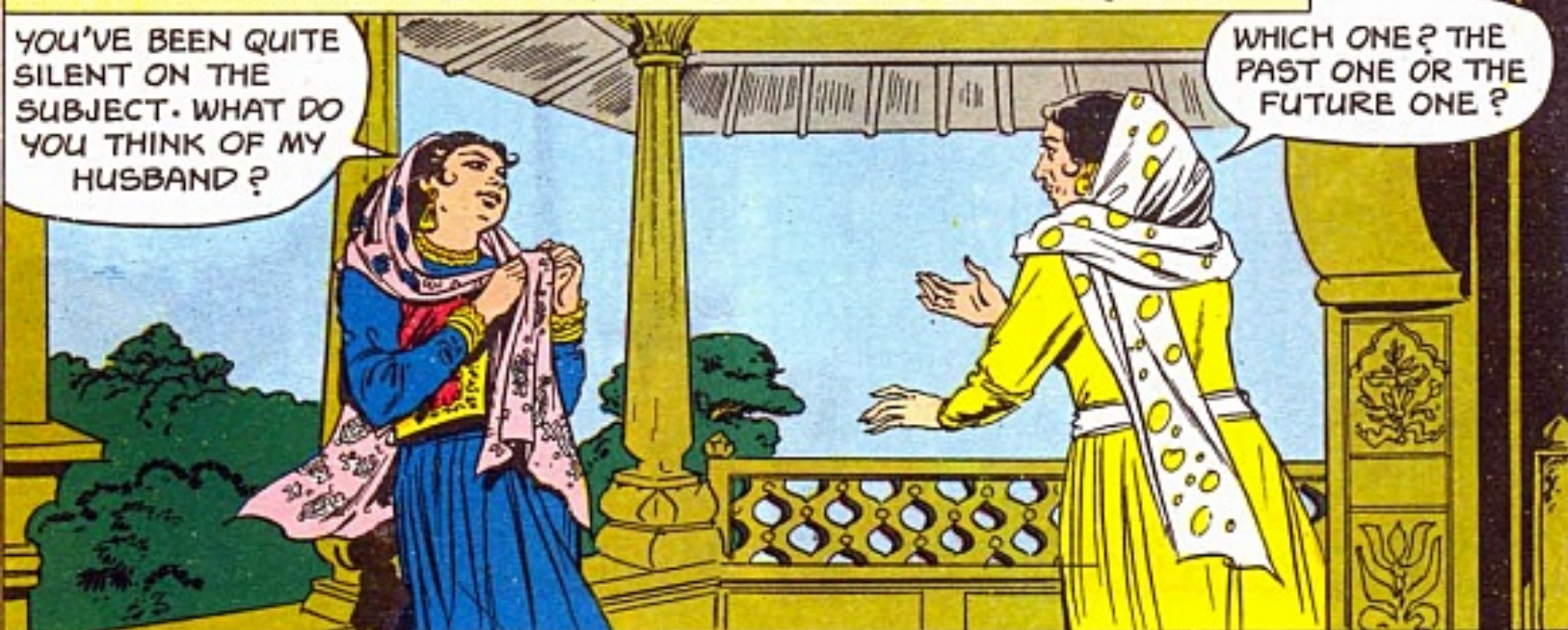


THE LOVE AND
AFFECTION
SHOWED BY
ALL OF YOU IS
WHAT HOLDS
ME BACK.





IN THE MEAN TIME, MATI BIBI HAD RETURNED TO AGRA; BUT HER THOUGHTS WERE STILL WITH NAVAKUMAR. ONE DAY SHE WAS TALKING TO HER MAID —



JUST THEN AN ATTENDANT CAME IN.

HAVE YOU HEARD?
EMPEROR AKBAR IS
NO MORE. PRINCE
SALIM WILL BE
CROWNED SOON.

CONGRATULATIONS,
BEGUM SAHIBA.

I AM NOT A BEGUM.
I AM LEAVING AGRA
RIGHT NOW!

YOU MUST BE
OUT OF YOUR
MIND!

MATI BIBI LEFT AGRA TO SETTLE
DOWN AT SAPTAGRAM.

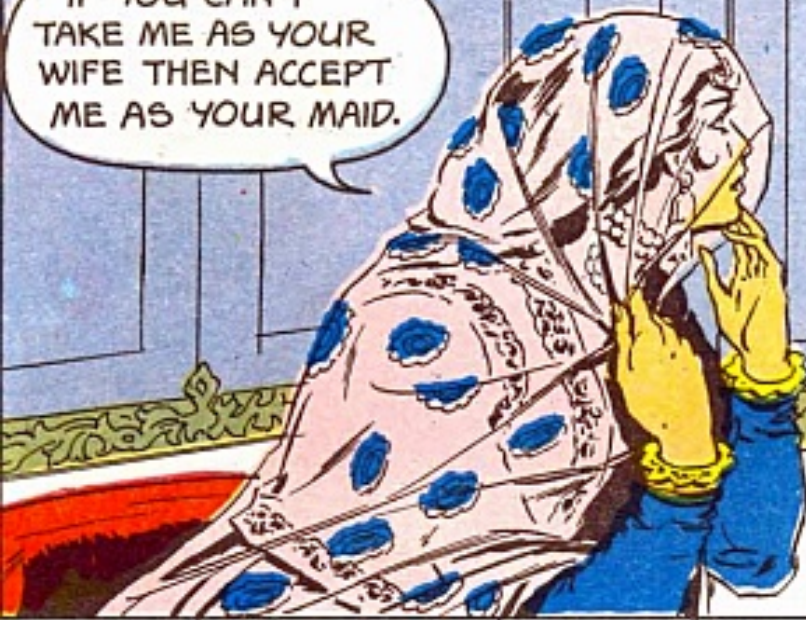
EVEN HERE
I AM NOT HAPPY.
I WON'T BE —
TILL I HAVE
SUCCEEDED IN MY
OBJECTIVE.

ONE DAY SHE SUMMONED NAVAKUMAR.

TAKE ME AS
YOUR WIFE.

HOW CAN YOU
SUGGEST SUCH
A THING! YOU
KNOW I AM
ALREADY
MARRIED.

IF YOU CAN'T
TAKE ME AS YOUR
WIFE THEN ACCEPT
ME AS YOUR MAID.



THAT CANNOT BE.
A POOR BRAHMAN
CANNOT TAKE A
RICH WOMAN OF
THE COURT AS
HIS MAID.



I WILL OFFER ALL MY
BELONGINGS TO YOU.
DON'T YOU SEE THAT
I HAVE GIVEN UP EVEN
THE THRONE
OF AGRA
FOR YOU?



YOU ARE FREE TO
GO BACK TO AGRA.

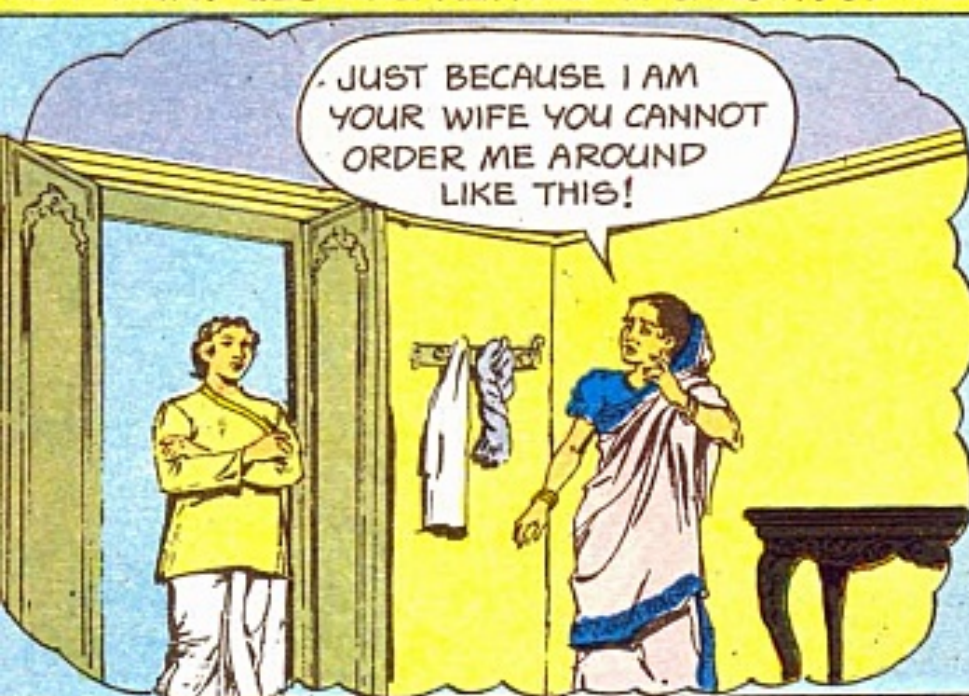
MATI BIBI BECAME VERY ANGRY.

YOU CAN'T ESCAPE
ME. WHEN I WANT
SOMETHING,
I GET IT.



HER ANGRY GESTURE REVIVED A CHILDHOOD MEMORY IN NAVAKUMAR.

JUST BECAUSE I AM
YOUR WIFE YOU CANNOT
ORDER ME AROUND
LIKE THIS!



HE LOOKED AT HER KEENLY.

WHO ARE YOU?
ANSWER ME!

I AM
PADMAVATI.
YOU
REMEMBER
ME NOW?



PADMAVATI!
MY GOD!

YOU'LL HEAR
FROM ME SOON.
GOODBYE!



WITHOUT WAITING FOR HIS REPLY, SHE LEFT THE ROOM. DUMBFOUNDED, NAVAKUMAR STARTED TO GO OUT.

POOR PADMAVATI!
HOW CAN I TAKE HER
BACK NOW? THAT
WOULD BE
UNTHINKABLE IN
OUR SOCIETY.



TWO DAYS LATER —

HOW DO YOU
LIKE MY
DISGUISE?



EXCELLENT!
BUT WHAT ARE
YOU AFTER?

FIRST, KAPALA
KUNDALA'S
DEATH. SECOND,
REUNION WITH
MY HUSBAND.



DISGUISED AS A MAN, MATI BIBI WENT TO THE FOREST NEAR NAVAKUMAR'S HOUSE TO WAIT FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO CARRY OUT HER PLANS. HOWEVER, HER ATTENTION WAS DIVERTED.



THIS IS FOR KAPALA KUNDALA....

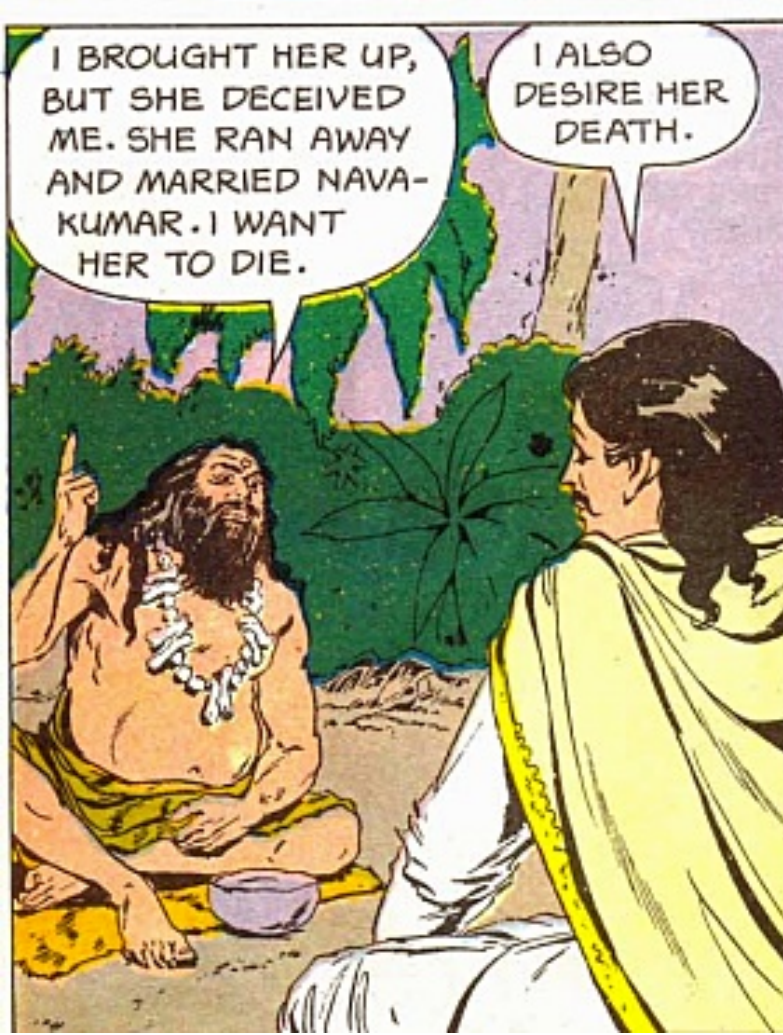
KAPALA KUNDALA! I MUST FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THIS.

GOING NEARER SHE SAW THE KAPALIK PERFORMING SOME RITES AND CHANTING THE NAME "KAPALA KUNDALA" REPEATEDLY. SUDDENLY THE KAPALIK BECAME AWARE OF HER.



WHAT DO YOU WANT?

I AM INTERESTED IN KAPALA KUNDALA TOO. WHAT HAVE YOU AGAINST HER?



I BROUGHT HER UP, BUT SHE DECEIVED ME. SHE RAN AWAY AND MARRIED NAVAKUMAR. I WANT HER TO DIE.

I ALSO DESIRE HER DEATH.



AND SHE TOLD HIM HER STORY.

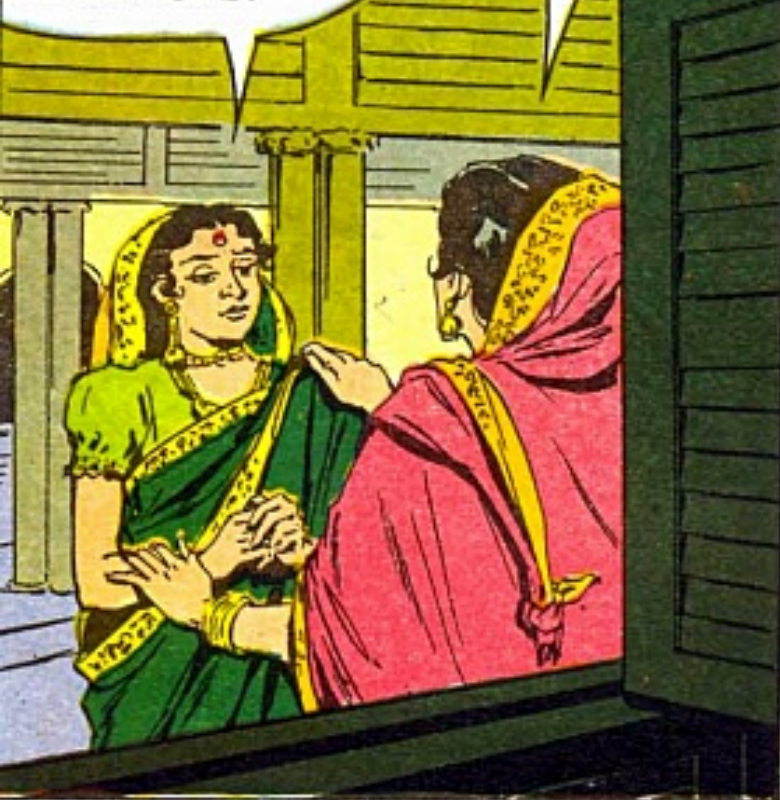
I WILL TELL YOU HOW TO BRING ABOUT HER DEATH. LISTEN.

THE TWO BEGAN TO PLOT.

MEANWHILE —

MRINMAYEE, I NEED A MEDICINAL HERB FROM THE FOREST. BUT IT'S GOING TO BE DIFFICULT....

WHY? WHAT'S THE PROBLEM, SHYAMA?



THE HERB MUST BE PLUCKED BY A WOMAN EXACTLY AT MIDNIGHT. AND SHE MUST BE ALONE. OTHERWISE IT WON'T HAVE THE DESIRED EFFECT.

YOU KNOW THAT I DON'T FEAR THE JUNGLE. I'LL GET IT FOR YOU.



BUT MY BROTHER MAY OBJECT.

WHY SHOULD HE? AND IF HE DOES, SHOULD I OBEY HIM EVEN IF HE IS UNJUST?



THAT NIGHT SHE WAS PREPARING TO STEAL AWAY INTO THE FOREST, BUT —

MRINMAYEE! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

TO THE FOREST, TO FETCH A HERB FOR SHYAMA.



AT THIS
TIME OF
NIGHT?

YES.

SHE EXPLAINED WHY SHE HAD
TO GO ALONE. NAVAKUMAR
RELUCTANTLY LET HER GO.

ALONE IN THE FOREST, SHE HAPPENED TO MEET MATI BIBI IN THE GUISE OF
A YOUNG MAN.

KAPALA KUNDALA!
I'M GLAD WE'VE
MET AT LAST.

YOU CALL ME
BY MY NAME, THOUGH
WE'VE NEVER MET
BEFORE.

DON'T BE AFRAID.
I AM A WOMAN AS YOU
ARE. THERE IS A
REASON FOR THIS
DISGUISE.

MATI BIBI LED KAPALA KUNDALA TO THE PLACE WHERE THE KAPALIK WAS PERFORMING HIS RITES.



KAPALA KUNDALA
MUST BE
DESTROYED....

YOU SEE! YOU ARE
IN GREAT DANGER. IF
YOU FOLLOW MY
ADVICE, YOU
MAY BE
SAVED.

KAPALA KUNDALA RECOGNISED THE KAPALIK IMMEDIATELY AND WAS PETRIFIED.



WHAT SHOULD
I DO?

WE MUST KEEP
A WATCH ON HIM
FOR A FEW DAYS
AND THEN
DECIDE WHAT
TO DO.



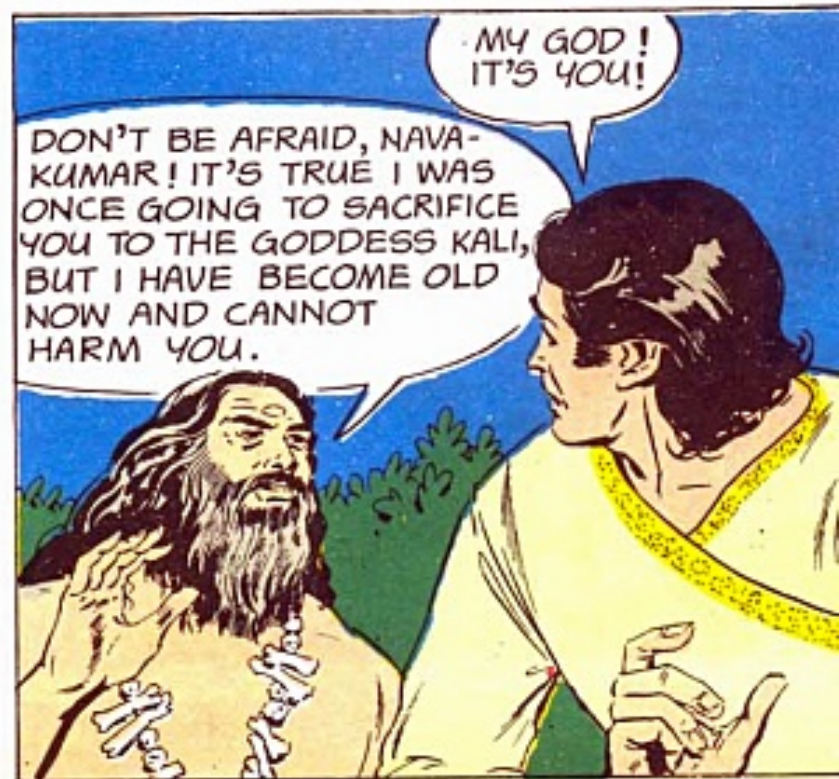
MEET ME HERE
EVERY EVENING.

I'LL DO AS
YOU SAY.

KAPALA KUNDALA KEPT HER WORD,
BUT SHE SAID NOTHING ABOUT IT
TO HER HUSBAND. A FEW DAYS
LATER —



MRINMAYEE IS
GOING OUT
AGAIN! AND
SECRETLY!
I MUST FOLLOW
HER TO SEE
WHERE SHE
IS GOING.





THE NEXT EVENING—

MRINMAYEE!
COME HERE.



WHAT IS IT? I'M BUSY.
I'M JUST GETTING
READY TO GO OUT.



I KNOW WHERE YOU
ARE GOING! YOU ARE
GOING TO THE
FOREST!



WHAT!

I'LL TAKE
YOU THERE.



NAVAKUMAR FORCED HER TO ACCOMPANY HIM.

BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND....

MRINMAYEE! THE TIME HAS COME TO ANSWER FOR YOUR SINS. I AM TAKING YOU TO THE KAPALIK.

YOU HAVE BEEN UNFAITHFUL TO ME.

THAT'S NOT TRUE. HOWEVER, I DON'T WISH TO DEFEND MYSELF....

I'D RATHER DIE THAN BE SUSPECTED BY YOU.

IS SHE INNOCENT?

AS THEY CAME NEAR THE PLACE OF SACRIFICE, NAVAKUMAR SUDDENLY CAME TO HIS SENSES.

THAT IS THE MAN WHO WANTED TO KILL ME!



IT HAD ALL STARTED IN THE FOREST AND WAS ABOUT TO END IN THE FOREST. WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT HAPPENED AFTERWARDS TO THE EVIL KAPALIK AND MATI BIBI. THEY WERE LEFT IN THE DARK WHILE NAVAKUMAR AND KAPALA KUNDALA CAME BACK TO THE LIGHT.



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Bankim Chandra wrote *Kapala Kundala* when he was only 28 years old. The name *Kapala Kundala* has been taken from the Sanskrit play, *Malati-Madhava*. In the play, Kapala is the associate of the evil *kapalik*, Aghora Ghanta, and she is as heinous as her mentor. But although our heroine in *Kapala Kundala* was also brought up by an evil *kapalik*, she is full human affection and kindness. While presenting this fascinating tale of romance, certain events and characters have been omitted and the story has been modified to make it suitable for children.

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